EMMA;

OR,

THE UNFORTUNATE ATTACHMENT.

A SENTIMENTAL NOVEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

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M.DCC.LXXIII.

EMMA

OR,

THE UNFORTUNATE

ATTACHMENT.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

I

TO

THE RIGHT HON.

LADY CAMDEN.

MADAM,

IN presuming to dedicate this Novel to your Ladyship, I am influenced only by the general respect paid to the name of Camden, and my own veneration for your Ladyship's character. The one, I flatter myself, will procure the book a

favorable reception, by precluding all ſuſpicion of its containing ſentiments inconſiſtent with the wiſdom and virtue implied in ſuch congenial patronage; and by the other I am prompted to embrace every opportunity of adding my mite to the tribute of public praiſe, ſpontaneouſly paid to your Ladyſhip's conduct, whether ſupporting your exalted ſtation by the eaſy dignity of your deportment abroad, or adorning it with thoſe domeſtic virtues and Chriſtian graces that conſtitute the chief beauty and glory of a woman. It is peculiar to good minds to receive tokens of reſpect and kindneſs, not for the importance of the gift, but for the good-will of the giver. This trifle

your

your Ladyſhip will condeſcend to receive as a teſtimony of the unfeigned eſteem of,

MADAM,

Your LADYSHIP's

Moſt reſpectful

And obedient ſervant.

Your Ladyship will condescend to
receive as a testimony of the un-
feigned esteem of,

MADAM,

Your LADYSHIP's

Most obliged

And obedient servant.

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EMMA.

Miſs EGERTON to Miſs THORNTON.

LETTER I.

Sunbury.

YOUR abſence, my dear Fanny, like that of the ſun, has robbed our little village of all its charms. I traverſe, in vain hopes of diſcovering, ſince you have left it, ſome of thoſe beauties which heretofore preſented themſelves to me in every ſtep I took: but when I have tired myſelf with

walking, I ſit down convinced how fruitleſs my ſearch has been; for every charm, alas! has fled with you; and the peopled banks of the Thames preſent to me a proſpect dull and dreary as the deſerts of Arabia.—It was your preſence which enlivened all the ſcene; and when I ceaſed to ſee you, nought elſe remained which could give pleaſure to my eyes.

Judge of the change in me when I tell you, that I have forſaken my harpſichord, refuſe to join the gay throng though courted to return to it by all thoſe who ſhould have moſt intereſt with me, and make ſo little uſe of my voice, that my father aſked me ſeriouſly

this

this morning, "whether I had "forgotten how to ſing?" In anſwer, I attempted our favorite ſong in the Padlock, but had not finiſhed the firſt verſe when the recollection of paſt days deprived me of the power of proceeding —I ſtopped—My kind father, perceiving my diſtreſs, wiped off the trickling tear, and propoſed a ride.—Glad to quit the painful taſk I had undertaken, and happy always to comply with his inclination, I inſtantly prepared myſelf to accompany him to Burton, from whence we were not permitted to return until late in the evening.

Lady Catharine, in whom good-breeding and ſincerity are ſo happily blended, as to form at once the Woman of Faſhion and the beſt of friends, omitted nothing that could help to diſſipate the chagrin ſhe ſaw me labouring under; whilſt her lively daughter told me, with a frankneſs which commanded belief, that nothing ſhould be wanted on her part to conſole me for the loſs of my agreeable companion; but added at the ſame time, that Mr. and Mrs. Bridges were unreaſonable creatures, if they imagined that Miſs Thornton was to bury herſelf in their old manſion merely to pleaſe their humor.

When

When ſhe had talked herſelf out of breath on this ſubject, ſhe deſired me to put on my *beſt looks*, and to prepare for *conqueſt*, as ſhe meant to introduce me to ſome *ſmarts* who had promiſed to dine that day at Burton.

The little attention I paid to her *advice* was, I muſt flatter myſelf, the reaſon why her prediction was not verified. I paſſed the whole day without receiving any homage more than the rules of politeneſs required, and left the gentlemen in the evening in as abſolute poſſeſſion of their hearts as if I had never made my appearance. Out of the four who were there, but one of them was entitled to any

degree of my notice, as he only had any thing extraordinary in his air and addreſs; beſides which, he is a near relation of Lady Catharine's. The other three did not riſe above the rank of *beaux*, and owed all their gentility to the cut of their clothes: but mortals who are indebted to the dexterity of their taylors alone for all their conſequence, are not ſubjects on which my pen can dwell with any chance of pleaſing you or myſelf.

I quit theſe therefore for our worthy Sidney: yet I cannot ſay much of him either, as he ſeldom writes to Sunbury; but there is a pleaſure in mentioning our friends, though we have nothing new to

ſay

ſay of them. Have you heard lately of him? You know I always ſuppoſed him more partial to you than to me; which makes me now imagine that you are better informed of his ſituation. I confeſs myſelf ſomewhat curious to know how he paſſes his time at Newark. He told me when he left this, that he ſhould not be able to return to us before the autumn; but I hope ſome change in their orders may bring his regiment nearer to us before that time; for it is too much to be at once deprived of my Fanny, and of this amiable tutor likewiſe. In loſing you both I have loſt all reliſh for any employment, but that of

writing. Expect then to be frequently troubled with epiſtles from

Your ever affectionate

EMMA EGERTON.

From the SAME to the SAME.

LETTER II.

Sunbury.

STILL, my deareſt friend, you will find me murmuring at your abſence; for time cannot leſſen my regret for a misfortune which every hour increaſes by furniſhing me with new inſtances of my loſs. If Mirth comes with its ſmiling train, I ſigh becauſe my Fanny is not here to partake of, and to

inſure

inſure its continuance; if Dullneſs intrudes, I lament that ſhe, who would have kept it a diſtance, is no longer here: thus in every turn your idea (all that now remains with me) becomes my torment.

My kind, my indulgent father tries every art to make me forget my grief, and is continually finding out ſome new amuſement for me. The whole neighbourhood at times is invited to the moſt ſumptuous entertainments at our houſe; at others we go to theirs. Private balls are much in vogue with us; Cotillons and Allemands prevail moſt, tho' we now and then admit of a few favorite Engliſh country-dances for the ſake of variety. I have had

many partners, but none of them equal to Mr. Walpole, who is polite enough to tell me he finds no pleaſure in dancing with any one but me. This diſtinction has its charms, as he is univerſally allowed to have a fine taſte, and excels ſo much in this art himſelf, that I cannot help ſuppoſing him a good judge.

I ſhould have told you, that the name of Walpole belongs to the gentleman, of whom I made ſuch favorable mention in my laſt. He has been ever ſince at Burton, where he is exceedingly careſſed by the whole family. Lady Catharine ſpeaks highly of his munificence, and his noble way of thinking;

thinking; Mr. Biſhop declares him to be the moſt accompliſhed young man he has ſeen lately; and Miſs Biſhop, who flirts with all mankind without loving any one, proteſts that her couſin would be the moſt enchanting fellow in the world, if he was not ſo particular in his notions as to be a reſtraint upon her vivacity ſometimes, and ſo very refined in his ſentiments as not to leave himſelf a chance for happineſs. My father ſays, he is the *moſt agreeable* man he knows. I do not ſay *quite* ſo much, though I allow him to be uncommonly handſome, and very pleaſing. He is juſt returned from his travels, and has acquired all the advantages

which

which ſuch a tour can give, without having any thing of the coxcomb. His fortune is large, and his connections noble. He is, in ſhort, *tout comme il faut.* All this I know, without having a wiſh to engage more of the notice of this general favorite than juſt what is ſufficient to give me a tolerable opinion of myſelf; which I am convinced it is neceſſary to have, in order to appear in public with any degree of eaſe.

You may remember how much trouble Sidney had, ſometimes, to make me overcome the *mauvaiſe honte* which made me ſo unfit to ſhine in company, and which not all his flattery joined to yours could make

make me get the better of. Should Mr. Walpole prove more ſucceſsful, I doubt both you and Auguſtus will ſuſpect that I pay more regard to his words than to yours: but let me deſire you rather to attribute my improvement to any other cauſe than to inattention to either of you; the laſt crime that can be poſſibly be committed by

Your EMMA.

Miſs THORNTON to Miſs EGERTON.

LETTER III.

The Grove.

THE friend you ſo tenderly regret, my dear Emma, is not leſs ſenſible of your grief than of the misfortune you complain of. An equal ſufferer with yourſelf, I am equally afflicted, and mourn the neceſſity which cauſed our ſeparation.

On my arrival at home I found my poor aunt, whoſe ſpirits had been affected by my long abſence from her, much altered in her looks. This new proof of her affection drew ſevere reflections from

from me on my own ingratitude, and want of a proper regard for her; but ſhe would admit of nothing that could depreciate me, and ſeemed to have loſt remembrance of every thing diſagreeable on ſeeing me again. My uncle, not leſs rejoiced at my return, begged me not to think of leaving them ſoon again, as neither he nor his wife enjoyed any happineſs without me.

Indebted as I am to theſe affectionate friends, will you not call me ungrateful, Emma, when I tell you that I cannot find myſelf ſo perfectly happy at the Grove, as I uſed to be at Sunbury? I argue with myſelf on this ſubject to no purpoſe:

purpoſe: reaſon has very little force when oppoſed to the ruling wiſh of our hearts; and I find myſelf diſſatisfied after having repeated over and over again, that no ſituation can be more eligible than my preſent. But this is a ſecret which, you may aſſure yourſelf, I carefully conceal from every body about me.

Our neighbourhood is not in itſelf ſo well calculated to afford amuſement as yours is. Moſt of the large manſions around us are deſerted, either from the *nonage* or the *dotage* of their owners: I cannot therefore boaſt of the appearance of a Walpole among us, any more than I can of the *peculiar* favor

of

of a Sidney, not having had a line from Newark ſince I left you: but without this, I think, I can give a gueſs at "how he paſſes his "time there," which for your *ſatisfaction* I will communicate in the next paragraph.

With his pretty perſon, embelliſhed with a red coat and cockade, I hold it utterly impoſſible for him to remain long in any place without attracting the regards of every woman in it; and you know how far his politeneſs carries him towards the ladies: judge then whether he has not, in this caſe, employment enough to fill up every hour in the day, what with making parties with ſome for morning

walks

walks and rides, and attending others to the balls and tea-tables.

If this method of accounting for his ſilence does not pleaſe you, my ſweet Emma, you muſt find out one more agreeable to you, and perhaps to him too. This I am convinced of though, that when you accuſe him of giving me the preference to you in any reſpect, you wrong him, without perſuading

Your affectionate

F. THORNTON.

Mr. WALPOLE to Col. SUTTON.

LETTER IV.

Burton.

I Have been at this place ten days, my dear Sutton, during which ſcarce a moment has paſſed without ſome degree of *gaieté*. Would you believe, that amidſt all this I have found leiſure to fall in love? yet it hardly amounts to that either; but there is not another phraſe which offers itſelf at this inſtant to expreſs what I feel for a little innocent girl of ſeventeen, who viſits here frequently, and who carries off all the admiration without

without knowing the meaning of the word. She is ſuch an abſolute novice in the ways of the world, that ſhe does not underſtand the common language of it. When I am her partner in the dance, and ſqueeze her ſoft hand, ſhe looks ſurpriſed, but ſhows no other emotion: if I compliment her beauty, ſhe bluſhes without giving credit to a ſyllable I ſay. You will wonder, George, where this phænomenon has been bred. Faith, I did not imagine that ſuch a being could exiſt in this age; but Emma Egerton has proved me miſtaken. She is the only daughter of a ſenſible and worthy man, who is Biſhop's intimate friend, and who has educated

cated this darling child in a very different ſtyle from the generality of her ſex: wrapped up in her, he has never loſt ſight of her ſince the death of her mother, who by all accounts was juſt as deſerving of ſuch a bleſſing as himſelf.

She is, they aſſure me, complete miſtreſs of every accompliſhment which can adorn a female: if her modeſty was not as great as her merit, I might by this have been enabled to have ſpoke, from my own knowledge, of her uncommon qualifications; but I have not yet prevailed on her to diſcover more than her ſkill in muſic and dancing, in both of which I may venture to pronounce her ſuperior to any Engliſh woman of my acquantance.

quaintance. As to her perſon, I cannot attempt to deſcribe it, as none of the terms made uſe of to expreſs beauty will give you any juſt idea of hers, that being as much out of the uſual ſtyle as the reſt of her perfections. I have ſeen features more exactly regular, forms more ſtriking; but never was there ſuch an aſſemblage of the graces to be found in one perſon! Her whole ſoul is to be ſeen in her countenance, which in every turn expreſſes all that is deſirable in woman.

If I was diſpoſed to play the *inamorato*, this is juſt the object I would chuſe; but as I do not fancy I ſhould ſhine much in this cha-

racter,

racter, I frequently quit her ſide to *flutter* about her leſs dangerous companions. Amongſt theſe Kitty Biſhop is not the leaſt charming, though a very different creature from *la belle Emma*; but ſhe is excellent too in *her way*. Never having ſeen her ſince ſhe left the nurſery until I paid this viſit to Burton, her genius was not at all known to me; but it did not take much time to become acquainted with her: all life and ſpirit, ſhe has no notion of confining herſelf to the dull forms eſtabliſhed in this country, which make our women in general almoſt afraid of ſpeaking to a ſtranger. This eaſe and affability render her eaſy of acceſs, whilſt her wit teaches us to keep at a pro-

per

per diſtance; ſo that no girl is more liked, or more reſpected, than this.

When vivacity is thus happily tempered, it keeps the poſſeſſor ſafe from the bad conſequences which ſometimes reſult from an extraordinary flow of ſpirits, and contributes to the pleaſure of thoſe who converſe with her. We now and then diſpute about the propriety of an action, but ſhe always gets the better of me by the keenneſs of her repartees.

Lady Catharine and Mr. Biſhop are remarkably tender parents: this and one ſon are all the children they have; and between theſe they have immenſe riches to divide.

Her

Her Ladyſhip is the Beſt Sort of Woman on earth. Do not ſuppoſe that I mean, Colonel, ſhe is inſipid: ſhe poſſeſſes, I give you my word, the higheſt merit, though that unfortunate expreſſion does not imply ſo much: her heart is ſuſceptible of the fineſt feelings, which ſhe indulges freely, and makes, by ſo doing, the happineſs of all around her. I do not know a more valuable friend, or one on whoſe judgement I would more firmly rely. She dotes on Miſs Egerton with the fondneſs of a mother, and gives her a character which would enſlave a heart leſs cautious than mine: it is not enough for me that ſhe ſeems ange-

lic; I muſt be ſure of her being more ſo than any female I have yet met with, before I attach myſelf to her: her ſoul muſt be free from the leaſt inclination to any other man; it muſt have been always ſo, or it will not, George, ſatisfy the delicacy of your friend. You have warned me againſt indulging this ſingularity; but it ſeems to be ſo interwoven in my nature, that no argument is able to remove it. But at preſent this is not a material point, as "I am not in haſte to wed."

You are acquainted with Biſhop: I ſhall not then ſay more of him, than that I join with you in eſteeming him as he deſerves.

I have already told you, that time paſſes in the moſt agreeable manner here; every body ſeems to be ſatisfied with it: I am ſo much ſo, as not to think of quitting Burton for ſome time, as I am preſſed to continue as long as I can with theſe worthy people; but I am not permitted to remain longer in my room, as my wild couſin is thundering at my door, and inſiſts on my joining the company, which has been aſſembled this hour, as ſhe ſays, and has been impatiently expecting to ſee me.

Adieu! You never complain of me when I obey a Lady's orders, knowing me to be

Yours *per ſempre*,

WILLIAM WALPOLE.

Miſs EGERTON to Miſs THORNTON.

LETTER V.

Sunbury.

FANNY, my dear Fanny! your Emma has been almoſt reduced to deſpair ſince you laſt heard from her. My beloved father has been on the brink of the grave: a violent fever attacked him a few days after I had written to you, and was near depriving me of the only ſupport heaven has left me. For ten days, medicine proved ineffectual: during that time judge of my diſtraction by the cauſe of it.

His

His head was hardly more affected than mine: his diſorder was leſs cruel, from being confined to pain of body. . . . I ſent an expreſs to Newark; Sidney came, and brought back Hope to the dwelling it had deſerted for many days. The ſound of his voice, on his entering the houſe, was the firſt joy my heart had known for an age: I flew to receive him, and conducted him to my expiring father: he opened his eyes, and ſeemed to revive at the ſight of the dear Auguſtus, who expreſſed all the tenderneſs of a ſon for him: his care and inceſſant attendance are rewarded by the recovery of that friend, to whoſe generoſity the

amiable youth owes all he poſſeſſes: the ſenſe he entertains of his obligations to him is ſhown in every action of his life. . . . . A dejection of ſpirits, which they aſſure me is the common effect of weakneſs, is all that now remains to diſturb me on my dear father's account. We try every method that affectionate duty can invent to divert him: he ſmiles on our endeavours, though they do not ſeem as yet to have taken effect.

This alarming incident has broke up our late parties; but the abſence of the *gay* world is amply made up to me in the company of two worthier men than any in it. Sidney entertains us with the many

adventures,

adventures, which from his profeſſion he has been engaged in at every place he has been ſent to: we paſs whole days in my father's apartment, without wiſhing for any addition to our number, unleſs my Fanny could make a fourth.

Auguſtus tells me I am improved ſince he left me; that I am grown taller. He commends the progreſs I have made in muſic: that is now the only thing he gives himſelf any trouble about: he pretends that he cannot leave Mr. Egerton; but I ſuſpect that he does not chuſe to employ himſelf with one ſcholar only, and that not *the one* who promiſed to do him moſt credit. Beg Mrs. Bridges,

my dear friend, to ſend you back to Sunbury, that I may ſtand a chance of knowing ſomething more than my Alphabet: ſhe does not gueſs what an injury ſhe has done me by taking you away; make her ſenſible of it, and I am convinced ſhe will grant my requeſt.

A note is juſt brought me from Miſs Biſhop, containing an invitation for this evening: ſhe will take no denial, and my good father adds his commands to hers. Sidney is to accompany me at his deſire alſo; there is no choice left for me. I go, my dear Fanny; but I leave this pleaſing employment with reluctance, though well-

dreſſed

dreſſed beaux and harmonious ſounds wait only the arrival of your

EMMA EGERTON.

Mr. WALPOLE to Col. SUTTON.

LETTER VI.

Burton.

OUR pleaſures have been damped, and every amuſement has ceaſed, for ſome time: not a ſwain but hung his dog, and broke his pipe, during the abſence of Emma, who had forſaken us for the laſt three weeks to immure herſelf in her ſick father's apartment, adminiſtering comfort to him during a long and dange-

rous illneſs. To ſave the reſt of mankind from deſpair, the Fates have calmed his pulſe, and reſtored his fair daughter to us: ſhe made her appearance at Burton yeſterday, and joy reaſſumed its empire. Confinement and anxious care have only faded the roſes of her cheek, to ſhow ſhe does not owe her power of charming to the beauties of complexion. She has not yet forgot her apprehenſions, though the faculty have poſitively declared him to be out of danger, and he is permitted to walk about the houſe: but never had ſhe looked more lovely in my eyes than in this ſtate; the ſweet marks of an alarmed ſenſibility viſible in her

her countenance, and increasing that softness which is so captivating in her. . . . She was escorted hither by a handsome young fellow—in *regimentals* too, George! I felt myself look *rather fooliſh* when, on going to hand her from the carriage, I perceived she had been better assisted by the lucky man who had the honor of being her companion from Sunbury. I lost no time in enquiring into his connexions with her: Lady Catharine, to whom I addressed myself, bid me, with a laugh, not to fear a rival in Mr. Sidney. As that was no season for entering into particulars, and I was resolved not to lose the happiness I enjoyed in her presence,

preſence, I took this advice: depending upon the hint, I baniſhed all doubts, and begged the gentle Emma would favor me with her hand that evening; which ſhe conſenting to, I found no reaſon to envy any other man, as ſhe made no diſtinction among us. . . .

No ſooner had they left us, than, impatient to learn more of *this* Sidney, I engaged Lady Catharine to give me his ſtory, which you ſhall have in her own words. . . .

. . . " His father, a man of " more merit than fortune, was " from his infancy the intimate of " Mr. Egerton: near neighbours " in the country, and educated " at the ſame ſchool, they never

" were

" were parted until Sidney (who
" was a younger brother) had a
" commiſſion purchaſed for him,
" and went abroad with his
" regiment: Egerton about the
" ſame time went on his travels,
" and when he returned to Eng-
" land, found his friend had
" married contrary to the ſordid
" maxims of his family, and was
" for that cauſe diſregarded by
" it. Their friendſhip was now
" renewed with double warmth;
" and he who had been favored
" by fortune would have been
" happy to have ſhared his riches
" with the neglected worthy, had
" not the noble Sidney ſcorned to
" receive, even from the generous

" Egerton.

" Egerton. Death very ſoon di-
" vided theſe kindred ſouls; and
" the ſurvivor found no conſolation
" for his loſs, but in transferring
" his kindneſs to the unhappy
" widow and her infant ſon. . . .
" Mr. Egerton was on the point
" of marrying when his friend
" died; and as ſoon as he did,
" he carried home, with his bride,
" Mrs. Sidney and her boy: the
" two ladies ſoon formed an attach-
" ment as ſincere as their huſbands:
" the Inexorable Tyrant only could
" diſſolve ſuch bands; and Mrs.
" Egerton ſoon wept over the
" grave of her Euphemia, as Mr.
" Egerton had over Sidney's.——
" The young Auguſtus claimed

" all

" all the tenderneſs of this worthy
" pair, and had no reaſon to la-
" ment the loſs of his parents,
" careſſed as he was, and treated
" in every reſpect as a child of the
" family.—He was ſent to Weſt-
" minſter ſchool, where he ſoon
" diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his
" genius: his patron hoped to ſee
" him ſhine in one of the learned
" profeſſions, and had actually
" deſtined him for the Bar; but
" the father's ſpirit prevailed, and
" nothing would ſatisfy the youth
" but a commiſſion. Mr. Eger-
" ton remonſtrated; but he talked
" in vain to a heart fired with the
" ambition of acquiring military
" fame, and much too warm to

" be

" be confined to plod over law-
" books: finding he could not
" change the firm purpoſe of his
" ſoul, he at length conſented to
" procure him a lieutenancy.

" The little Emma, the youngeſt
" and only remaining child of five,
" was quickly deprived of her ex-
" cellent mother, and became the
" ſole darling of her father; nor
" was Sidney (who ſtill remained
" under the hoſpitable roof at Sun-
" bury, when he was not obliged
" to attend his new employment)
" leſs fond of her than if ſhe had
" been his ſiſter: all his leiſure
" hours were dedicated to her im-
" provement; he made her read,
" write, think, and ſpeak, with
" propriety.

" propriety. Her father, equally " attentive to her education, joined " in finiſhing the accompliſhments " of a girl who does honor to her " two preceptors."

So clear an account of their intimacy has deſtroyed every ſhadow of my late fears; and Sidney ſhall be dear to me, as the friend of Emma.

I am obliged to be at home next week: Digby, Parker, and Vernon, are to be with me. If after an abſence of five or ſix weeks I ſtill feel my heart diſpoſed to return to Burton, I will come again, and try then to thaw the frozen boſom of Miſs Egerton. I am not quite certain that I love her enough

enough to be uneaſy when I can no longer ſee her every day: yet the ſenſations I had on ſeeing her with Sidney yeſterday, do not ſeem to prognoſticate much *peace of mind* to me; I like not theſe ſymptoms —they muſt be ominous . . . . . But who can ſay what the air of Dorſetſhire may produce? Abſence has frequently been found a ſpecific in ſuch caſes; nay, in much more violent attacks than that I ſuſtain. Aſſure yourſelf however, that you ſhall be informed of every ſtep I take.--But what buſineſs can you have again in Lincolnſhire? It is but the other day you went from thence.—What's become of Miſs Neville? Is ſhe

gone

gone down there?—You are reſerved, Sutton; and this is no uſual thing with you ..... Take care of yourſelf—an artful woman will make a fool of you; an amiable one may make you ſtill more unhappy: your temper will not bear you through, as mine will. Be adviſed by me; come to us at Spring Park, and be ſatisfied with the friendſhip of

Yours, W. WALPOLE.

Col. SUTTON to W. WALPOLE, Eſq.

LETTER VII.

Milfield.

IT is no good ſign with me, my dear Walpole, when you complain of my reſerve: it is an infallible

fallible teſt of my being diſſatisfied with my actions, when I wiſh to conceal them from you. Yet it is ſtrange that I ſhould not be ſatisfied, after having done what was meant to increaſe my happineſs, and what I now think muſt do it.—Wherefore then have I expreſſed myſelf in doubtful terms?—Will not every wiſh of my heart be gratified in poſſeſſing the woman I love?—It muſt be ſo—I cannot have miſtaken the means of bliſs ..... But I am myſterious—In good truth, I have no inclination to ſpeak out; for I can hardly hope to find you a more partial judge, than I have been to myſelf.

After

After all however, if a man hurts no one by changing his mind, there can be no harm in it: fickleneſs of itſelf would not be criminal, unleſs its conſequences were ſo; and this innocent failing is all I have to accuſe myſelf of. But I have fallen into the *oracle ſtyle* again, which it is neceſſary I ſhould quit, to enable you to comprehend what I would be at. Take then, in plain Engliſh, the account you extort from me . . . . .

True, it is not more than three weeks ſince I left Waterlands, in which time I have croſſed ſeveral counties, and ſpent ſome days with Beresford at Milfield; and to-morrow I return again to Percy's,

cy's: carried back by an irreſiſtible impulſe, and bound by ſolemn promiſe to be there the twentieth of this month. All this for the ſake of a woman, and that woman not Miſs Neville, though you ſuſpect her to be the cauſe of my *journeying*. But ſhe is too much engroſſed by her ſiſter's affliction to beſtow ſo much attention on me; and ſhe, who was for a long time my friend, my conductreſs, on whoſe counſels I could depend with ſafety, has reſigned me up (at my own requeſt, I acknowledge) to one not very capable of guiding even herſelf: but what ſhe wants in *prudence* is amply ſupplied in "the ſweet variety that's in her;"

and

and then ſhe loves me too, which, let me tell you, to a grateful heart is no ſmall attraction. . . . . I ſometimes indeed draw a parallel between the two *charmers*, which does not pleaſe me ſo much as I could deſire: for inſtance, I throw into one ſcale Harriet Courtney's blooming youth, her beauty, vivacity, and ingenuous manner; into the other goes Priſcilla Neville's merits—agreeable, generous, ſincere, mild, ſentimental: here I ſtop, leſt my favorite nymph, with only her aërial attributes, ſhould be found too light to preſerve the balance. It is hardly fair to draw compariſons, ſince it is poſſible by ſo doing to injure very high

high characters. This is the caſe here: Harriet is leſſened by the ſuperiority of the other; but I do not wiſh her to be more perfect than ſhe is; ſhe would be leſs charming if ſhe had f wer *formalities*. I renounce all this reflexion; it anſwers no end but that of breeding melancholy. To come back then to my ſtory, I have engaged myſelf to meet this bewitching girl at Waterlands, where I firſt ſaw her; and when there, ſhe is to diſpoſe of me as ſhe pleaſes: aye, ſhould ſhe even chuſe to carry me to church with her, I am ready to attend her. . . . . So now, Walpole, you know as much of my deſtiny as I do myſelf. If

you

you loved as much as I do, you would not hesitate about returning to Burton; but, I know not how it is, you do not in general appear to reason as I do on every point: yet you are less liable to be imposed upon, when your own *whims* do not throw you into the scrape; for when they predominate, I would not give a rush for all your sagacity. I approve of the description of your Emma; her softness will temper your violence: therefore pursue your *penchant*, and prevail upon her to go to Spring-park, where I shall be very happy to pay my compliments to her as *Maîtresse du Chateau*. Adieu!

Yours,

GEORGE SUTTON.

Miſs EGERTON to Miſs THORNTON.

LETTER VIII.

Sunbury.

AT the concluſion of my laſt, I informed you, my dear Fanny, of our intention of going to Burton: we accordingly went, and ſpent the evening in dancing and other gaieties. Mr. Walpole fell to my lot, being a good partner; I own that, excepting our Auguſtus, I preferred him to every other preſent: he was in higher ſpirits than ever I ſaw him in before, and appeared more agreeable than

than ever. . . . . All the company ſeemed pleaſed but Sidney, who either ſat with his eyes fixed on the floor in ſullen ſilence, or danced ſo inattentively that Miſs Biſhop (his partner) could not ſupport his ſtupidity: ſhe reproached him continually with it; he did not liſten to what ſhe ſaid, but ſtill blundered on. When we got into the chaiſe to go home, I aſked what had cauſed his uncommon gravity: he made no reply until, repeating the queſtion, I added, that I believed he had left his heart at Newark: he then deigned to break ſilence, aſſuring me I was miſtaken; but after that, until we

we got into my father's room, not another word eſcaped him.

Is not *your friend*, Fanny, much changed? I know not what to think of him. When I went down ſtairs the next morning, ſeeing the ſame diſcontent ſtill in his looks, I ventured once more to enquire, whether he was well. "Yes, I "am," was his ſhort anſwer.—Have you ſeen my father to-day? is he worſe than he was? cried I, the laſt words followed by a ſhower of tears. He was viſibly moved at this, and in the kindeſt manner begged me not to alarm myſelf unneceſſarily; that my father was juſt as well then, as when I ſaw him the night before, and he hoped

there

there was not the leaſt occaſion for my fears. As he finiſhed ſpeaking, the object of my concern entered the room, and put an end to our further diſcourſe on that ſubject, and to my anxiety—though not to Sidney's gloom, which has not ſuffered the ſmalleſt diminution theſe three days. He affects to treat me with the moſt diſtant reſpect; and if at any time he directs a ſpeech to me, I am Miſs Egerton, or Madam: the familiar name of Emma is never uſed now by him; one would ſuppoſe he had forgotten that I had ſuch an appellation. He even takes ſuch pains to ſhun me, that when my father goes out

of the room where we are ſitting, he gets up, walks a few turns about, then quits it in a hurry, as if afraid of being interrupted in his meditations by the impertinence of my converſation. As I perceive he wiſhes to avoid me, I have not lately attempted to offer to ride or walk with him. When he comes into humor again, he may not perhaps find me ſo complaiſant as I have been.

We are engaged to Mrs. Talbot to-day: Auguſtus at firſt poſitively refuſed to go; but my father deſiring him not to let me go alone, he at laſt conſented.——If he

does

does not make a more entertaining companion than he has been lately, I ſhall prefer going by myſelf another time..... I will finiſh this at my return: until then adieu!

Miſs EGERTON in Continuation.

This is not to be borne! I ſhall never wiſh more to be accompanied by Mr. Sidney.—He has been ten times more ſtupid this evening than ever he was; not a ſyllable did he attempt to utter during our viſit, nor was he more loquacious in going or coming from thence.—The vivacity of Mr. Walpole

preſerved me from the influenc of this infectious melancholy, or I ſhould have been horribly dull—but he ſung, laughed, and chatted with ſo much good-humor and eaſe, that I found time paſs away with unuſual velocity, until he told me he ſhould be obliged to go into Dorſetſhire to-morrow; when the idea of our loſing ſo great a help to our mirth, deprived me of much of what I might have enjoyed. Then, I ſaid, he would be a loſs to our Coterie: Could he perſuade himſelf that I really thought ſo, he would not be long abſent, was his gallant reply.—I laughed at the ſpeech, and left him to ſettle the point as

he

he choſe. I am apt to fancy he will do it to his own advantage; for, without having any extraordinary portion of ſelf-conceit, he certainly has not the extreme diffidence of poor Auguſtus; he has, doubtleſs, been always taught to conſider himſelf as a perſon of ſome conſequence, and this would inevitably deſtroy much of that quality.

The clock has ſtruck two; Wedneſday morning has broke in upon me before I have done talking of Tueſday night.—Walpole departs to-day; Sidney remains in the dumps.——Alas! your Emma cannot now hope for any amuſement: even ſleep forſakes

her;—but friendſhip glows always with the ſame ardor in the breaſt of my deareſt Fanny's

Affectionate

EMMA EGERTON.

Miſs THORNTON to Miſs EGERTON.

LETTER IX.

The Grove.

REALLY, Emma, I begin to ſuſpect that you delight in drawing characters, by the ſketch you have ſent me of Sidney.—Know him again! not I truly; for how is it poſſible I ſhould diſcover any thing amiable through the

the gloom you have drawn him in? —I feel myſelf afraid of the *goblin*; but as diſtance from danger inſpires cowards with reſolution, I ſhall venture, notwithſtanding the *frightful tales* you tell, to attack him upon the wonderful alteration of his behaviour. I ſhall write to him by this poſt, and truſt to his politeneſs for receiving a more ſatisfactory anſwer than you have yet done: but ſhould this be fled with his other charms, and he ſhould ſend me no more than an Yes or a No, I ſhall lay up the letter in my cabinet of curioſities, and keep it as a match for the Lacedæmonian *if*—which has hitherto maintained an unrivalled glory among the Laconic

anſwers.

anſwers.—I ſhould declare him to be in love, but that I cannot accuſe one of my ſex of ſuch a crime as that of driving *him* to deſpair; there cannot be ſuch cruelty in a feminine form ſurely.

But to be ſerious, I cannot, my dear Emma, divine the cauſe of this fatal change; yet I very ſincerely pity the unhappy youth, who, never having been known to act without reaſon, cannot now be ſuppoſed to do ſo: from this I conclude that ſome heavy misfortune weighs down his ſpirit. I have leſs right to demand his confidence than you have; nevertheleſs, as I have often found it eaſier to write than to tell a ſecret, I am

not

not without hopes of prevailing on him to entruſt me with what he refuſes to you. This benevolent deſign forces me to conclude, with this only addition, that I am always

Yours,

F. THORNTON.

Miſs EGERTON to Miſs THORNTON.

LETTER X.

Sunbury.

WHAT an enemy to beauty is ſorrow! *It feeds*, "like "a worm in the bud," on the damaſk cheek of Sidney: you would not ſuſpect me of exaggeration

geration could you ſee him at this time. On his coming down to breakfaſt this morning, ſo pale and unlike his former ſelf, my father was abſolutely ſhocked at his looks, and aſked with earneſtneſs, what was come to him: he complained of the head-ach, ſaid the heat of the weather had kept him awake the whole night: taking his hand, my father proteſted he was in a high fever, and begged that a phyſician might be ſent for, which the other abſolutely refuſed conſenting to, ſaying he ſhould be very well as ſoon as he went into the air; he would walk, and that would infallibly reſtore him to health.—The moment

ment the breakfaſt things were removed, I propoſed our walking: he took up his hat to attend me; but his mind ſuddenly changing, he deſired me to excuſe him, as he choſe to ride.

I left him to purſue his inclination, and came up to acquaint my dear Fanny with the unaccountable ways of *her* friend: he cannot be mine, I am ſure, or he would not act thus.....

My dear father is not yet enough recovered from his late indiſpoſition, to attend, as he uſed to do, to all the trifles that paſs: he has not obſerved any but the difference in the countenance of his once-gay Auguſtus; and this is ſo

well

well accounted for by his complaint, that he is not tormented as I am, who ſee ſo much more, with a thouſand uneaſy thoughts about him.

From your letter, which I received to-day, I find you are equally ignorant of the cauſe of his wretchedneſs——nay, then I ſhould not complain.—Yet, until now, I did not imagine Sidney had paid ſo little regard to the rights of friendſhip: he always told me I ſhould be unreſerved in my confidence, and that concealment became criminal, when it made my friend unhappy. He ſpeaks better than he acts, and I am angry with him for teaching

me

me a leſſon which he will not practiſe himſelf.—But he is unhappy; he is ill. Ah, Fanny, how does my heart melt at his ſufferings! Compaſſion has ſubdued my reſentment. . . . . .

He is returned: I ſee him enter the orange-walks, and go towards the pavilion. I will follow him, I will beſeech him to tell me his grief: if he refuſes, I renounce his friendſhip; it is become an empty name, and I will no longer be the dupe of his falſe profeſſions: it is now he muſt prove himſelf ſincere, for I will no more be put off with evaſions. * * * * * *

* * * * * * * * * *

* * * * * * * * *

O my friend! What has my indiſcreet enquiry produced? was it not better to remain in ſuſpenſe than to acquire the knowledge I have done?—But whither am I rambling? what will you think of me when I have repeated to you what I have juſt learnt from the moſt amiable of men? How will you be able to reconcile the affliction I have expreſſed, with the happineſs of being beloved by Sidney? There is no other way of doing it, than by recollecting that "Bliſs goes but to a certain "bound;

"Beyond 'tis agony."

Let me, however, be more explicit, and proceed in order, from the

the moment I quitted my room to join the dejected Auguſtus, until I found myſelf again in the ſame place.

I laid down my pen, determined to know from him what had thus long diſturbed him, and followed him as faſt as I could walk; but before I could overtake him, he had turned into the pavilion, and I ſaw him ſeated there in ſo profound a reverie, that he did not look up even at my approach: the ſound of my voice made him ſtart: I began by aſking how his head was, and hearing *that* pain had been removed by his ride, Tell me, continued I, whether your head was not this morning an excuſe for

your

your heart? And when you have anſwered that, ſay, Mr. Sidney, how you can make your conduct and your doctrine agree together? Have I not been taught *by you*, that my friends have an indiſputable right to partake in all that concerns me; and have I ever concealed a thought from you? Yet you have ſecrets which I am not allowed to know; you indulge a grief which conſumes you, and *your friends* are not admitted to partake of it; and after numberleſs enquiries, I am ſtill at a loſs how to account for your late behaviour.

Do not, Miſs Egerton, interrupted he, inſiſt upon my telling you---

you—I ſhould but ill deſerve the regard you ſhow for me, were I to diſcover the cauſe of my unhappineſs. It is not of a nature to be removed by your *compaſſion*.—Leave then, nor further urge me to reveal what——By heaven, Madam! I would not expoſe myſelf to your contempt. . . . . .

This laſt word ſtruck me with ſuch aſtoniſhment, that, like Echo, I returned it back, and cried Contempt! without knowing for an inſtant what to add, until, recovering myſelf a little, I proceeded to aſſure him, that it was impoſſible he ſhould ever merit contempt—You diſtreſs me infinitely by ſuppoſing ſo—No, my dear

Sidney,

Sidney, (laying my hand on his to detain him) you cannot. . . . . .

Am I then dear to you, Emma? ſaid he, taking my offered hand.

Indeed you are, replied I; nor have you ever had reaſon to doubt it, until your unkind reſerve forced me to appear indifferent, for fear of being thought troubleſome to you.

Oh! no Miſs Egerton, purſued he, you have not *affected* indifference lately for *me*; you acted from your feelings: but I have no right to arraign your conduct; you are directed by principles which are not to be controverted. I am unhappy, I confeſs it, Madam, but ſo far from blaming *you* for

it,

it, I revere you the more. You have ſhown your judgement in loving Mr. Walpole. . . .

Mr. Walpole! exclaimed I with new ſurpriſe; how have I behaved to make you accuſe me of loving him? How can you be ſo unjuſt, Sidney? I did not expect ſuch uſage from you: he may be very deſerving, but does it follow that I muſt love him?—So far from it, he is odious to me, ſince I find you ſuſpect me of loving him. . . . .

Forgive me, my ſweet girl, anſwered he with a voice ſoftened into the tendereſt accent, I did not mean to offend you; I only wanted to know whether your little heart had not been caught by

by the particular notice of an elegant man, who has diſtinguiſhed you on every occaſion, and who is himſelf univerſally admired. I am convinced now my Emma never loved him; but—— there he ſtopped, as if he had repented having ſaid ſo much, yet had more to ſay on the ſame ſubject. . . . Impatient to hear the reſt, I went on interrogating him. But what, Sidney?—this is not the ſecret you had to diſcloſe; this has been invented only to draw off my attention: but I will not be ſo fooled. Why do you ſtill look ſo diſſatisfied, yet pretend it was becauſe I loved Walpole? You ſay you are convinced now, that

that I do not love him, yet you ſtill ſigh.....

Have I not cauſe to ſigh, Emma? ſaid he, again taking my hand:—can your being indifferent to *him* make me happy, unleſs it proceeds from your preference to—— To whom? cried I (my patience quite exhauſted by this delay)—ſpeak, and I promiſe not to conceal a thought from you.

Your ſincerity terrifies me: I dread, my Emma, to hear you pronounce your averſion to your once-favored Auguſtus: as your friend you bleſſed me with an affection, which as a lover I may forfeit. This opened my eyes

at once; and, ſhocked at the part I had played, I was going, without giving him time to add more; when, throwing himſelf at my feet, and preventing me from ſtirring out of the place where I was ſtanding, he went on thus.—

You have forced this confeſſion from me, my dear Miſs Egerton: I have perhaps offended you by it; if ſo, I here intreat your forgiveneſs, and beſeech you not to think of leaving me until you have ſpoke comfort to me.— Indeed I am not angry, anſwered I in a tremulous tone; but let me go.

Now you have told me this, ſaid the encroacher, you ſhall not

not leave me, until you have anſwered another queſtion:—— Am I hateful to you?

You may gueſs, my friend, what reply I made; it was ſuch as made Sidney happy, and procured me the liberty of retiring from the pavilion.

I had ſoon run the length of the garden, and had got half way up the ſtairs, when I met my father, who ſtopped and aſked if I was well: Yes, ſir, ſaid I, but with ſuch agitation, that he grew more uneaſy, and inſiſted on my going into the dreſſing-room; where he and Wilſon made me ſwallow a large doſe of hartshorn drops. I do not think

I ever ſtood more in need of them. The cloſeneſs of the weather was blamed again, and I was requeſted not to leave my room until the cool of the evening: glad to be excuſed from going down to dinner, I readily complied with my tender parent's deſire; and have paſſed the time in ſcribbling to my dear Fanny, whoſe heart, I am convinced, is ſo much intereſted for her friends, as to enjoy their happineſs..... Sidney will ſmile again, and joy will fill once more the ſoul of

Your

EMMA EGERTON.

Miſs THORNTON to Miſs EGERTON.

LETTER XI.

The Grove.

YOU may forgive Sidney, my dear Emma, becauſe he put you into good-humor, I ſuppoſe, by ſaying he loved you. It muſt be owned there is ſomething ſoothing enough in thoſe words: but I, who have not ſuch a veil thrown over my eyes, and whoſe anger (by the bye) will not break his heart—I may therefore indulge my vindictive

temper. I then proteſt, that I reſent, firſt, his unjuſt ſuſpicions of you in regard to Walpole; and, ſecondly, his cloſeneſs in not ſooner revealing to you the cauſe of his *moping*. I have no idea of his concealing from you a point, wherein you were equally concerned with himſelf: but he knew the gentleneſs of your diſpoſition, and truſting to that, followed his own vagaries:—lucky was it for him that he had ſuch an one to deal with. . . . . .

Read this to him, for I mean he ſhould be lectured for his miſconduct: it is neceſſary ſometimes to let theſe bluſtering Lords of the Creation underſtand

that

that we are capable of *correcting* and *directing* them.

As to the *ſhock* you felt on perceiving the part you had acted in the *comedy of the Pavilion*, I do not wonder at it; your invincible innocence having carried you much greater lengths than you could have imagined: but you have ſuch an happy countenance, that there was no miſtaking your artleſs intention; therefore there was no occaſion for your bluſhing at what had paſſed. . . . . For the life of me, I could not have heard half of what you did, without having gueſſed all the reſt:— this fore-knowledge would have embarraſſed me, and inſtead of

bringing on the declaration by *your leading* queſtions, I ſhould have gulped and hemmed for an hour without getting out a word, and poſſibly might have left the garden without any more *delightful* ſenſation than that of diſappointment.--Thus the ignorant frequently have the advantage over us knowing ones.

Having thus given my opinion of the commencement, let me now throw in a few inſtructions for your future proceedings: they conſiſt chiefly in adviſing you to acquaint Mr. Egerton as ſpeedily as poſſible with the ſituation of your hearts; it is a duty owed to every parent, and what he of all

others

others is moſt entitled to from his extraordinary merits in that character: beſides, the ſooner ſuch matters are adjuſted, the better.

You may probably doubt my right to counſel in this affair, from my not having yet reached the *years of diſcretion*; but after you have conſidered the advice, I do not think you can heſitate to allow I am as well qualified for that office, as any ſtaid matron of forty-five.—This I am ſure of at leaſt, that no age can render me more ſincerely intereſted in your welfare; which truth I ſhall ſubſcribe my name at full length to.

FRANCES THORNTON.

Captain SIDNEY to Miſs THORNTON.

LETTER XII.

Sunbury.

YOUR cenſure, my dear Miſs Thornton, is juſt: I was to blame in ſuſpecting my Emma; I was more ſo in hiding from her the ſource of my uneaſineſs. Could I have been perſuaded of this a week ago, how many dreadful moments ſhould I have eſcaped! But let me not regret the paſt, ſince it has brought me to ſuch delightful proſpects.——Your charming friend

friend repays all my ſufferings, and bids me expect happineſs for the remainder of my days.—Yes, Fanny, her love will enſure my felicity, and your eſteem will increaſe it: this laſt I will ſtill hope for, ſince your *reſentment* has only ſhown itſelf in the mild correction of a friendly concern for my failings. . . . .

This paſſion, ſo newly diſcovered by our Emma, has long inhabited the boſom of her Sidney, and ſeems to have been a native of the place, ſo fixed and ſettled has it ever been. It had grown ſo powerful for the laſt twelve months, that, fearful of betraying myſelf, I went early in the ſpring

to

to join the regiment, hoping that reaſon, aſſiſted by abſence, would render my attachment leſs violent. Can you forget how much it coſt me to tear myſelf from the ſociety at Sunbury? You then expreſſed your ſurpriſe at the extreme concern I ſhowed at the thoughts of leaving my friends for a few months.—Ah, Miſs Thornton! you could not then conceive what I felt; will you not now acknowledge that my diſtreſs was natural?——Emma had no need of concealment; ſhe was grieved at my departure, ſhe did not hide her emotions, and when I embraced her at going away, ſhe ſobbed aloud: not

capable

capable of ſtanding ſuch a ſcene, I hurried from her, and flung myſelf into the chaiſe. I paſſed hours in that journey, which even now I ſhudder at recollecting: I endured all the tortures of deſpair.——Time ſoftened the horrors of it, but it could not deſtroy them; and I was ſtill unhappy, when the illneſs of Mr. Egerton recalled me to this loved ſpot. Emma received me with the higheſt teſtimonies of joy: ſoon after I came, Heaven reſtored her worthy father to her prayers. . . .

'Till now, I had been of the general opinion of the world, which ſuppoſed his only child, from the appearance he had always made,

made, would be entitled to a large fortune at his death: this circumſtance had entirely deſtroyed my hope; I would not for the creation have incurred the ſuſpicion of wiſhing to enrich myſelf by marrying the *heireſs* of Mr. Egerton, though I doated on his *daughter* to diſtraction.

At my arrival, I heard the phyſicians had pronounced the fatal ſentence, and that my friend, my generous benefactor, was thought not to have many hours to live. Senſible of his own danger, the good man had prepared to meet his fate with a fortitude conſiſtent with that character. One thought only imbittered

imbittered the pangs of death—his little darling was to be left friendleſs and unprovided for, expoſed to all the hardſhips of a ſcanty fortune and diſappointed expectations. He called me to his bedſide the morning after I came, and then owned, for the firſt time, the real ſituation of his affairs, condemning the thoughtleſs prodigality he had been guilty of, and beſeeching me to guard the ſweet Emma from the ſnares that might be laid to betray her unſuſpecting virtue, and to reconcile her to the misfortune of living on an income that would but barely ſupply the neceſſaries of life; a

thouſand

thouſand pounds being all he could ſecure to her from the wreck of a conſiderable fortune: his place ſtill furniſhed him with an handſome annuity; but as that would ceaſe with his life, it made no proviſion for his daughter.

Pardon me if I ſay that at ſuch a time I could feel joy: what I had juſt heard gave me, I confeſs, a ſenſation ſo near to it, that no other word will expreſs my meaning; it was now I could firſt indulge a thought of her becoming mine. Small as my fortune is, it would preſerve her from the wretchedneſs her father feared: the huſband of his Emma would

would guard her from the wrongs, and by his tenderneſs ſoften all the miſeries of life, repaying to her the obligations he owed to her parents.—Thus duty and love would unite in bleſſing the wretch, who until this hour had never dared to hope.....

I did not then think it proper to declare my ſentiments; but aſſuring my friend that I would be as good a guardian to his child, as he had been to me, I waited until I had ſounded the heart of Emma, before I ſpoke more openly of my deſigns; for without her love nothing could be certain.——A favorable turn in the diſorder put an end to our immediate

immediate apprehenſions, and when time had ſtrengthened our hopes, Mr. Egerton began to inſiſt on our going into company again, dreading leſt confinement and cloſe attendance in a ſick room ſhould affect the health of his beloved girl.

At his requeſt I attended her to Burton, and found that her return diffuſed a pleaſure which her abſence had robbed the party of: every one was eager to congratulate her on her father's recovery, and on her own releaſement: Mr. Walpole (whom you know by character) was more violent than any one elſe in expreſſing his raptures. . . . The muſic being

ing called for, the choice of partners became the next object; and I ſaw the envied Walpole lead my Emma to her place. Until that moment I had never felt the torment of jealouſy: I became uneaſy to myſelf, and diſagreeable to the company. Miſs Egerton was not ſtruck with the change in my behaviour, till my lively partner (Miſs Biſhop) began to rally me unmercifully on my ſtupidity: ſhe then aſked what ailed me: I hardly anſwered the queſtion; and finding it vain to endeavour at aſſuming a chearfulneſs foreign to my heart, I bore with all they choſe to ſay on my unuſual

uſual dejection, without attempting to account for it.——After we broke up, Emma was ſcarcely ſeated in the chaiſe when ſhe again renewed her enquiries: I now, unjuſt as I was! attributed the attention ſhe paid to me only to Walpole's not being by, who, I fancied, had engaged all her notice during the evening: I therefore ſhowed very little regard to the kindneſs ſhe then ſeemed to have for me, and did not ſpeak to her until we got to Sunbury.—The next day, and the next to that, paſſed without our entering into converſation; for indeed I avoided her, unleſs when Mr. Egerton was with us.—

us.—On the Tueſday following, the ſame ſet of company met at Mrs. Talbot's: Walpole was even more particular to Miſs Egerton than he had been when I had ſeen them together at Burton—his vivacity amuſed, his partiality, I thought, charmed her: he ſpoke of leaving this neighbourhood in a few days after: I heard the dear girl tell him, "he "would be a loſs——" I ſaw his eyes ſparkle with pleaſure at the ſpeech, and his anſwer confirmed my ſuſpicions. . . .

My wretchedneſs was now completed: I ſpoke not; I knew not what was ſaid to me. In the midſt of my madneſs, I had however

however honor enough to think it would be the height of injuſtice to reproach her: ſhe had not deceived, ſhe had not ſlighted me for him; for ſhe knew not that I loved her: there was no crime then in preferring another; he was a man to be preferred to moſt others; and I applauded the taſte which doomed me to miſery. . . . She ſaw enough to find out that I was unhappy: ſhe had aſked the cauſe, and I had refuſed to ſpeak it: ſhe grew angry at laſt, thought I treated her with indifference, and ſhowed ſo much reſentment, that I imagined ſhe hated me. This added new ſtings to my deſpair, and I

paſſed

paſſed that night in agonies I had never known before.

When I appeared at breakfaſt, the kind Mr. Egerton was frightened at my looks, and the gentle ſoul of Emma ſeemed not leſs moved. I complained of the headach, mentioned walking as a cure for it: ſhe condeſcendingly offered to accompany me. This was the time in which I meant to prove myſelf worthy of her eſteem at leaſt.

She loves Walpole, cried I to myſelf: he can offer her a fortune worthy of her merit—ſhe will be happy—I will not diſturb her felicity by letting her know ſhe has made me miſer-

able—

able—I will bury in ſilence this luckleſs paſſion, and apply for leave to go into the Ruſſian Service—my dying in the field will ſpare her the regret of having driven me to deſpair—her ſenſible heart ſhall not ſuffer an unneceſſary pang for me. . . . .

Knowing that, if I truſted myſelf with her, her ſoftneſs would undo my beſt-formed purpoſe, I begged ſhe would excuſe my walking with her, as I thought riding would be moſt ſerviceable to me. I did not ſtay out long, but came back, unperceived as I ſuppoſed, and retired into the pavilion, intending to continue there until I had ſummoned re-

ſolution

lution enough to conceal my diſorder from the eyes of the family: I had juſt thrown myſelf on a ſeat, when the muſical voice of my angel rouſed me from the dream I was in.

Her eloquence prevailed; I revealed to her all I felt, and was rewarded for the confidence I placed in her.

Come, my amiable friend! and witneſs our happineſs: Emma is not quite ſatisfied without you; I am not *jealous* enough in my nature to quarrel with you, though ſo highly diſtinguiſhed by her favor: come then, and be convinced you will always find a moſt ſincere admirer in

AUGUSTUS SIDNEY.

Miſs THORNTON to Miſs EGERTON.

LETTER XIII.

The Grove.

THERE are indiſpenſable duties belonging to every connexion we form in life: thoſe of a friend, my deareſt Emma, are as numerous, and as obligatory, as any. It is in this light I venture to ſpeak to you with a freedom which nothing elſe would authoriſe, but which this certainly will excuſe: yet, ſhould I exceed the limits which you preſcribe me, let me entreat you

you to think the warmth only of my zeal for your welfare has drawn me into the fault; and your heart, I am ſure, will pardon an error which ſprings from ſuch a motive.

Taught from common report to conſider your fortune as large, I enjoyed the idea of your beſtowing on Sidney your hand, and by that means raiſing from mediocrity to affluence a mortal who would do credit to the higheſt rank, ſince only this was wanting to give luſtre to his extraordinary merits.—It has ever been a maxim with me, that, if there be enough to provide decently for a family, it matters not which

party brings the means. When a perſon loves, there is no great compliment in making the fortune of the object: it is done with a view of gratifying the paſſion; and therefore, if there is any obligation in the caſe, it is the receiver who confers it: and knowing the generoſity of your temper, I was convinced your thoughts agreed with mine. Mr. Egerton is ſo indulgent a parent, and has ſuch a liberal way of thinking, that I could not doubt his conſent to your union with his beloved Auguſtus, although it would bring no increaſe of wealth with it.—Matters thus ſettled in my own mind,

I encouraged an attachment which promiſed ſuch happy conſequences; but, undeceived by Sidney's letter, from which I learn that your expectations are reduced to a very ſmall inheritance, I find my notions exceedingly changed in regard to you both: I tremble, my dear girl, at the dreary view which offers itſelf to me, when I reflect on the many diſaſters attending ſuch imprudent matches. Do not haſtily enter into engagements which will laſt when every inducement to them has fled: wait ſome years, at leaſt until your lover's ſervices ſhall have have raiſed him in his profeſſion. . .

I am at a loſs what to adviſe, but my fears increaſe momently for you: they may however proceed from an exceſs of prudence, or from want of a thorough knowledge of things.

Let me hear ſoon from you; and, if you can diſpel theſe troubleſome miſts of imagination, I ſhall rejoice to ſee the proſpect brighten, as I am, believe me,

Moſt ſincerely yours,

F. THORNTON.

Miſs

Miſs EGERTON to Miſs THORNTON.

LETTER XIV.

Sunbury.

THE friendly manner in which my Fanny ſpeaks to me, deſerves the moſt candid dealing on my part. You are entitled to know every circumſtance relating to me; even the baſis of my future expectations ſhall not be concealed.....

You fancied, my dear friend, until you received Sidney's letter, that my father could beſtow a large fortune on me, and your

concluſions on the ſuppoſition were worthy of your noble character.—I never thought of the proviſion that might be made for me by the beſt of parents, who, I have always found, conſulted my real intereſt in every inſtance: I did not know, until you informed me, that it would not be in his power to give me much. The knowledge of it cauſed no other regret, than that which aroſe from the thought of not adding to my lover's fortune. I told him this: he curſed his own folly in not enjoining you to ſecrecy on this head, as he never intended I ſhould hear it. He rejoices at the circumſtance,

ſtance, and bids me not to repine at what ſecures his bliſs. Intereſted as I am in that, judge whether I am not already conſoled for not being an heireſs! He has not more than three hundred a year to offer me; but, my deareſt Fanny, is not that enough, when people love as we do? I have no wiſhes which that ſum will not ſupply; and Auguſtus ſwears he does not deſire a larger but for my ſake; if I am contented, he is entirely ſo. How many happy beings live on leſs!—The joys of poſſeſſing immenſe riches are all imaginary: with more confined deſires one enjoys juſt as many

with ſmall poſſeſſions: it depends on ourſelves, not on our wealth, whether we ſhall be happy or not.——Contented *minds* are capable of ſupplying more precious treaſures than Peruvian *mines* can do.——I am not ambitious of eclipſing the reſt of the world; nor does avarice tempt me to wiſh for gold to look at: what uſe then can I have for more?

You may ſay, perhaps, that with much money I might do much good. I will not ſatisfy myſelf with anſwering you in the common manner, by obſerving that few of thoſe who are able, are willing to beſtow benefits:

I would not ſuppoſe my heart ſo bad, as to ſuſpect it would feel leſs in any ſituation than it does now for the diſtreſſed. But let us examine who thoſe are to whom we give that title, and we ſhall find that the demands on our purſes are very trifling: the common objects of charity are relieved at a very ſmall expence; the *ſcraps* and leavings of the moſt œconomical table ſuffice to feed numbers of thoſe.—To the *unfortunates* of an higher claſs a tear dropt in ſympathy is a more acceptable donation than an handful of gold; and it is for theſe I have always ſuffered moſt. But I have obviated

the

the objections you might raiſe on both ſides, and theſe are the only ſubjects on which I could poſſibly have been made uneaſy with a moderate income.

Could wealth procure certain happineſs, Mrs. Weſt, whom you muſt remember to have ſeen here, would have been living at this time.—She gave up Mr. Leſley, to whom ſhe had been ſolemnly engaged, for Mr. Weſt, who offered her a large ſettlement and all the charms of affluence:—there was no great difference in the characters or perſons of the two men; and her friends applauded her *diſcernment* in accepting of the higheſt bidder.—

der.—They married; the world pronounced her happy, and every appearance confirmed this ſentence: yet this glittering beauty pined in the midſt of ſplendor, and died two months ago of a broken heart, after poſſeſſing for four years the riches to which ſhe had ſacrificed every other conſideration.—Mr. Leſley, on the contrary, with a more amiable woman, partakes of the higheſt happineſs, though he has not as many hundreds a year as Mr. Weſt has thouſands.

It may not be fair, very likely, to draw a general concluſion from one example: my experience does not furniſh me with more,

more, and my heart does not require another to convince it of the inutility of money.....

Sidney will ſpeak to my father to-morrow: his conſent will ſanctify my choice; he will approve of the diſintereſted ſentiments we both profeſs—ſentiments which his own precepts have taught.——A doubt now and then ariſes, ſuggeſted by my *Fanny's fears*, and damps my joy; but I baniſh it inſtantly, and conſider it as an inſult on that kind father, who has never yet made me feel his power by contradiction, and who will not now ſhow himſelf more averſe to comply with the inclination of

Your EMMA EGERTON.

Captain SIDNEY to Miſs THORNTON.

LETTER XV.

IT is all over, my dear Miſs Thornton, and Sidney bids adieu to every flattering hope! Baniſhed be every thought that cheated me with ill-founded ſchemes of happineſs, the fond illuſions of a diſtempered brain, deſtined as I was to the wretchedneſs I inherited from my birth! —It was madneſs to believe Mr. Egerton would give *me* his daughter; and his refuſal brings death with it——

Oh,

Oh, Miſs Thornton, can you imagine diſtreſs equal to mine!—But you can—you, who are ſo well acquainted with my Emma, may gueſs what the loſs of her muſt occaſion—you will feel for my ſufferings; and you alone ſhall hear the ſtory of my woes.

Raiſed from my dejection by her kindneſs, my doating ſoul was carried beyond the reach of fears; and after hearing her ſay ſhe loved me, I defied the malice of fate.—I told my love to Mr. Egerton, and beſought him to bleſs me with her hand, not ſuppoſing he could deny a requeſt which *my folly* called reaſonable: he liſtened to me with a mixture

of

of pity and ſurpriſe: I ſaw his countenance change, the inſtant he underſtood the purport of my ſpeech; but my infatuated imagination could not be perſuaded to ſuſpect it could be unfavorable to me—its wildeſt ſallies of fury now will not let me condemn him for his cruelty to me: he was not leſs affected than myſelf, when, after a heart-felt ſtruggle, he ſpoke the following words . . . . " And would you, " Sidney, ruin yourſelf and " Emma? Would you entail " beggary on your poſterity?"— Theſe fatal ſounds gave me the firſt idea that I could yet be unhappy.—I was going to ſpeak again,

again, when he ſtopped me by ſaying, " Hear me, Auguſtus, " not ſo much as the father of " Emma, as the common friend " of both . . . The ties of nature " are not ſtronger in my breaſt " than thoſe of friendſhip; nor " is your peace leſs dear to me " than hers. I eſteem your ge- " nerous propoſal; it is ſuch as " does honor to you: but the " higher you are raiſed in my " opinion, the more unwilling I " am to involve you in miſ- " fortune. A large inheritance " does not of itſelf conſtitute " happineſs, but a very ſmall one " is abſolute miſery. Could you " bear to ſee a beloved wife and

" her

"her helpleſs infants enduring
"all the hardſhips of poverty,
"and periſhing in wants which
"you could not relieve?—Could
"your heart ſupport horrors cauſed
"by your own imprudence? You
"are not aware, my dear Sidney,
"of the torment of leaving a
"family unprovided for!" His own ſituation for a moment checked his accents—I attempted again to ſpeak, and was not more capable.... Taking me by the hand, when he had a little recovered himſelf, he thus went on—
"I would convince you that
"nothing but power is wanting
"to make me conſent to your
"demand: could I give my
"daughter

" daughter fifty thouſand pounds,
" no other man ſhould have her;
" but I cannot ſeal her ruin, and
" yours too, by conſenting to
" your union.—I do not talk to
" your paſſions; it is your judge-
" ment I appeal to: and let
" that, in a calmer hour, decide
" the cauſe. . . . . Take three or
" four days to conſider of what
" I have ſaid; argue the caſe
" with your uſual candor; then
" tell me, my friend, my Au-
" guſtus, tell me then, whether
" I have injured you in this re-
" fuſal!—If you can help it, do
" not ſee my girl during the
" time I would have you take
" for conſideration; your reaſon

" will

"will not have fair play in her "preſence.——I will not add "more; you are too much moved "at this time to attend any "longer to me;—but remember, "Sidney, it is on your *honor* I "depend."

It ſhall not diſappoint you (exclaimed I to my ſelf, for Mr. Egerton was gone): he who has dared to love thy Emma, dares not betray her into miſery; ſatisfied to bear the whole weight of his own, provided ſhe does not feel any part of it... Ah! will ſhe not feel it? cried I the next minute: there's the ſting. She loves as well as I do, and her ſoul will be as deeply wounded

by

by a ſeparation; our ſufferings muſt be mutual. What is this honor which Mr. Egerton depends on? A mere chimera, raiſed but to diſappoint our views: there is more *real honor* in drying the tears of my love—Emma ſhall be mine. As I finiſhed this, I was going to caſt myſelf at her feet, to propoſe her going off with me. That thought, thank heaven! vaniſhed as ſoon as I had formed it; the influence of virtue again enlightened my mind, and made me look with terror on the project. Shall I teach my lovely pupil a new leſſon, added I, and deſtroy the very charms I adore? Can I hope that her perſon alone will

content

content me, after having deprived her heart of its moſt valuable qualities?—Is it by diſobedience I would ſecure her love?—And is it by robbing my benefactor of his only child, that I would repay the debts I owe his bounty? The conflict now became too great to be endured, and in the tranſports of my frenzy nothing appeared too horrible to be attempted: quite overcome, at length I flung myſelf on the floor, and continued for ſome time in ſilent agony; then ſtarting up, I rang the bell, and ordered my horſes to be got ready, not clearly underſtanding what I meant to do; but after riding about for ſome hours, I

determined

determined on coming to London; where as ſoon as I arrived, I made application for leave to go into the Ruſſian ſervice: it coſt me ſome trouble to procure it; but through the intereſt of Lord —— it was at laſt obtained: and at the end of the week I diſpatched a letter to Mr. Egerton, acquainting him, that his decree had been obeyed; that I ſubmitted to his dictates; but that I could never bring myſelf to viſit his houſe again; and as a proof of this, that a chaiſe then waited to convey me to Portſmouth, from whence I now write to my dear Miſs Thornton; waiting only a change

of

of wind to embark, quite indifferent as to what may befall me in a ſtrange land, and firmly reſolved never more to return to this.——

If I could give utterance to the pains that diſtract my heart, you might, my friend, conclude that they would find ſome mitigation.——Complaints are great helps to the unfortunate, but the ill-fated Sidney is not of the number of thoſe who can waſte their ſorrow in murmurs.—Unhappy as he is, of whom can he complain?——Emma was too amiable not to be loved; her father too ſenſible of her worth, not to prize it highly.—Is then

any fault to be found?—O Miſs Thornton! pity the wretch who is thus ſituated..... Comfort your angelic friend; teach her to forget that lover, who would have ſacrificed his life for her; who gives up his happineſs in hopes of ſecuring hers——who doats, who deſpairs!.... who retains no ſenſe but of her lovelineſs, and of his own miſery.—A ſignal calls us on board—Adieu for ever!

Yours,

A. SIDNEY.

Mr.

Mr. WALPOLE to Col. SUTTON.

LETTER XVI.

Spring-Park.

POSITIVELY I muſt go back to Burton: after an abſence of three weeks, this Emma ſtill dwells in my thoughts, and preſents herſelf ſo conſtantly before me, that I can fancy nothing elſe: ſhe has deſtroyed all thoſe pleaſures which heretofore delighted me—my friends wonder what has happened to me!—my flirts forſake me... but if ſhe will love me, George,

what need I care for any one elſe of the charming ſex? She told me the night before I left Burton, "that I ſhould be a loſs "to their Coterie:" ſhe looked too as if ſhe felt it—who knows, my friend, but ſhe may have thought of me ſince? . . . . . If there is ſympathy in our ſouls, ſhe has not thought of another creature.—My company is ſtill with me, and mean to ſtay ſome time longer.—You are by this happily arrived at Waterlands, and living on Miſs Courtney's ſmiles: happy Sutton! . . . . I ſaid above, that I was forſaken by *my flirts*. The anecdote I am going to relate will prove the truth

truth of it: but you will obſerve, that I have ſtill *ſpirit* enough left to diſregard ſuch attempts.——

Some one propoſed the other evening, that we ſhould all go to B. where there is a ſubſcription aſſembly once a fortnight, when the whole neighbourhood meet, in order to be *ſociable*; the old women, to ſquabble over cards; the young ones, about partners: and when they have all fretted and fumed for four or five hours, they part, proteſting they have had a moſt *agreeable* meeting. Without hoping for any very high entertainment, it was agreed that we ſhould go, and accord-

ingly we made our appearance in the ball-room about eight o'clock: four beaux were no unwelcome gueſts, and the ladies eyes told us as much. We took our rounds, bowing to ſome, and ſtaring at others. After examining the features of each female, we got up to the top of the room, where I ſoon eſpied Lady Caroline Warren: ſhe has long looked upon me as her captive, and as I had not yet given her room to ſuppoſe me changed, I immediately engaged her: Parker took her friend Miſs Villars... Our two lazy companions pretended they were too nice to take partners, after we had cho-

ſen

ſen the faireſt among them: they ſat by, equally deſpiſed by the dowager and the ſpinſters.

You have ſeen Lady Caroline———ſhe is not as pleaſing as Miſs Egerton, but few women are ſo beautiful as her ladyſhip. As to her underſtanding, I have always been ſo taken up in looking at her face, that I have never been at leiſure to take notice of that: but for *heart*, George, that was totally forgotten in her compoſition; ſhe knows not a ſenſation, but what ariſes from vanity: admire her beauty, and ſhe becomes charmed, not with you, but with your converſation: make love to

her like an hero in romance, ſhe will liſten to all you ſay—but aſk for a return, and ſhe does not comprehend you.—The anxieties of love might be detrimental to her bloom, and ſhe would rather ſee the world periſh, than have that hurt.—I knew her perfectly well, therefore was not ſurpriſed when I ſaw her quite out *of ſorts* with her partner, who, to ſpeak ſincerely, was drawing compariſons not much to her advantage, and did not flatter her as uſual. Digby, who was idle, ſoon perceived the diſcontented looks ſhe caſt on me, and took every opportunity of paying his court to her.

her. When the ſecond dance was finiſhed, ſhe pretended to be fatigued, ſaid ſhe had promiſed her mother not to dance more than two, and contrived to place herſelf between him and me.—I was now become a mere cypher; not a ſyllable did ſhe addreſs to me, and I heard her other neighbour run on at a rate that would have ſatisfied the vaineſt of her kind. . . . . I am not accuſtomed to be thus neglected—Vernon laughed—I found myſelf piqued—Knowing her diſlike to Miſs Gore, who has long rivalled her with the men, and who has more cleverneſs, if ſhe has not quite ſo finiſhed a form; when

I ſaw her approach the bench we were ſitting on, I inſtantly got up, inſiſting on her taking my ſeat: ſhe had refuſed dancing that night, ſo that I encroached on no man's property. Lady Caroline turned her head to ſee who I had placed next to her: I ſtood leaning down, near Miſs Gore, and appeared to be entirely engaged by her converſation, without paying the leaſt regard to her: the lady was offended; I enjoyed my revenge, and in leſs than ten minutes Digby was left to talk by himſelf; for Lady Caroline attended only to the new-formed party.——She ſoon after ſignified her

her inclination to go down the next dance; but I begged ſhe would not run the riſque of *fatiguing* herſelf too much, told her the weather was warm, and that Lady Surry would be diſpleaſed with me, was ſhe to exceed the *promiſe* ſhe had made her. . . . It was her turn now to be piqued: ſhe got up to go into the card-room—I aſked Miſs Gore to go with me, obſerving that ſhe would find that a more pleaſant place to ſit in than the ball-room: ſhe conſented, and we got into a new ſcene of action; but it was not a more agreeable one to the haughty beauty, for I ſtill continued to diſtinguiſh her

her rival. . . . The two ladies ſpoke now and then to each other: I was not obliged to take notice that it was with particular coldneſs; and I continued to mortify the fair one, who began hoſtilities, without pretending to reſent her ill-uſage.

We came home, and criticiſed on the behaviour of the female world: Vernon ſneer'd at it like a man who had no tender connexions with it: poor Digby, humbled by his *fall from favor*, ſpoke highly of its charms, but ſighed when he had done: the more fortunate Parker defended the ladies cauſe with good-humor: I ſhould have been ſevere on the whole, had I not remembered the amiable

Emma, who has merit enough to ſave the reſt of her ſex from my cenſure; and for her ſake, I joined Parker in calling them the Beſt Work of the Creation. Adieu.

Yours, W. WALPOLE.

Miſs EGERTON to Miſs THORNTON.

LETTER XVII.

Sunbury.

LET me, with returning health, reſume my pen, and tell my Fanny, now, alas! the only friend I have, the ſufferings I have endured.——Cruel Memory! recall not thoſe happy hours

hours when joy ſparkled in each line, and every ſentence conveyed ſome new pleaſure! But come, dark Oblivion of all paſt happineſs, and, aſſiſted by Deſpair, help me to paint the horrors that now ſurround me! O what a blow has my fond heart ſuſtained!—Sidney, dear-loved name!—no more ſhall thy ſound gladden my drooping ſpirits!—no more ſhall Emma have the bleſſing of hearing thee ſpeak the words of wiſdom and inſtruction to her!...

Why play thus with the ſuſpence of my Fanny? Rather let me endeavour to calm my bewildered ſenſes, and recollect the ſcattered fragments of my ſad hiſtory....

I could give no account of my Auguſtus, until a week ago, when I heard he had ſailed for Ruſſia—that was the only time he has been mentioned to me ſince the day after I had written my laſt——that dreadful day, which in my folly I had called lucky, brought with it the end of every joy..... My father (be witneſs, Heaven! I impeach not his tenderneſs) was ſought by Sidney, who wanted to obtain his conſent to our marriage: knowing his deſign, I retired into my dreſſing-room as ſoon as breakfaſt was over, and waited there ſome hours in anxious expectation: every ſtir,

during

during this time, cauſed a flutter; and my heart bounded at an unuſual rate when I heard his ſteps in the paſſage: my eyes were caſt down at his entrance; I felt my face glow—but what became of me when, on looking up, I perceived my father tottering, and ſcarcely able to reach the chair next to me!—I now foreboded the impending miſchief, and without waiting to hear what he was going to ſay, I threw myſelf on his neck, crying, O, Sir, you have already pronounced my doom; your looks have forbidden me to hope:—you would have met me with your own ſmiling counte-

nance,

nance, was I to have been happy!———Tears now ſupplied the place of words—he did not try to ſtop them, but looking on me with compaſſion, his own eyes moiſtened.—— "My "child," ſaid he, embracing me, "do not diſturb yourſelf thus with "apprehenſion—you have to deal "with an indulgent parent, not "with an inſulting tyrant who "ſpeaks his will, and will be obey-"ed without giving a reaſon—— "your diſtreſs rends my heart— "I am not equal to the taſk "which you and Sidney have "impoſed upon me.——Be more "compoſed, my Emma; let me "beſeech you to conſider your

"father,

" father, whoſe peace depends " on yours, who lives for your " happineſs, and who, to promote " that, would forget every thing " elſe.——Attend to what I have " to urge; I will repeat what I " have ſaid to Auguſtus: he is " ſatisfied with me; and will " my daughter be more refrac- " tory?"——I promiſed by ſigns (for ſpeech was denied me) to hear, to be compoſed.—He then told me all that had paſſed between him and Sidney; but my diſordered head does not retain one word of a converſation, which from its effects rendered me incapable of reflection: for, a ſhort time after it was ended, I was

put

put to bed in a high fever, which brought on a delirium that laſted for ſeveral days; during which my father never quitted me.—Wilſon tells me, he would not ſuffer another attendant to be about me whilſt I continued to rave. On the fifth day I began to regain my ſenſes, and with them new aggravation to my misfortunes—I called inceſſantly on Death to come to my relief, but my wiſhes were again thwarted; I was not to be ſo ſoon indebted to him for his aſſiſtance; reſerved, doubtleſs, to be a monument of the rigor of fate.——A whole fortnight, paſſed in a ſick bed, reduced me to a ſkeleton: I was

not

not able to move when the fever left me..... It was in this low ſtate, that my father choſe to acquaint me with Sidney's having left England.—When we have once encountered the *worſt* of evils, we become inſenſible to ſmaller ones: I had loſt all hope from my father's refuſal; the departure of my lover could not now kill me: I heard it with ſuch compoſure, that it aſtoniſhed my informer: dreading the effect of concealed grief, he tried to make me more unreſerved, by ſaying,

"Do you not regret his de-
"parture, my dear?—Indulge
"your ſorrow; your father will
"weep

" weep with you, Emma; he " loves Auguſtus, he mourns his " loſs. Do not be aſhamed to " ſhew your tears, they will flow " from a good cauſe; and I ſhould " eſteem your heart leſs, was it " not ſenſible of the worth of " ſuch a friend." The tears trickled down his cheek whilſt he ſpoke; mine wanted but ſuch an example to make them flow: we continued thus for more than an hour, and I found my heart lightened by this diſcharge. My father, at laſt regaining his voice, continued the converſation. " Sen- " ſibility, my dear child, which " makes the diſgrace of the weak " and baſe, is the glory of the " virtuous;

" virtuous; it gives merit to every
" action; it leads them to the
" height of perfection: the in-
" ſenſible cannot find out a path, to
" which the heart alone can guide
" one; the practice of virtue with
" them is the effect of conſtitu-
" tion; if they do right, it is be-
" cauſe they feel no temptation to
" do wrong. You, my ſweet girl,
" are not of this ſet: in the midſt
" of your ſufferings, your father
" rejoices to find you are poſſeſſed
" of the treaſure of ſenſibility.—
" It encourages him to hope, that
" ſhe who has felt the force of
" love, will not be indifferent to
" the filial duties, and to the calls
" of friendſhip . . . . . .Lament,

" my

" my Emma, the lover you have
" have loſt; I conſent to your
" bewailing him with all the vio-
" lence of diſappointed paſſion—
" but when you have paid ſuf-
" ficient tribute to his memory,
" I ſhall expect to ſhare your ten-
" derneſs—I claim it as your parent,
" I beg it as your friend: in thoſe
" characters I will even now ſpeak
" to you, not as to a weak woman
" who loves, but as to a rational
" being capable of feeling what I
" ſay. To mention my affection
" for you would be unneceſſary,
" ſince every action of my life
" proves it: the return you have
" made has been full recompence
" for all I have done. If, in diſ-

" poſing

" poſing of your heart without
" conſulting me, you ſwerved,
" ſtrictly ſpeaking, from the obe-
" dience you owed me, I had no
" right to complain of you, ſince
" I expoſed you to the danger,
" by placing in your way an
" object to be loved. I was not
" conſcious of my error until it
" became too late to remedy it;
" but, grieved as I was at diſcover-
" ing your attachment, I never
" once attempted to reproach you
" or Sidney with that as a crime,
" which, I confeſs, I could not
" help thinking reflected honor
" on you both. I only regretted,
" that fortune had been leſs partial
" to you than nature: but, as
" that

" that could not be helped, it was
" my duty to interfere, and break
" off a connexion which threatened
" inevitable deſtruction.--Happily,
" the ſame principles which had
" cauſed the miſchief, proved its
" antidote: the virtue of Au-
" guſtus overcame his love; it
" gave me back my daughter when
" deſpair had hurried her to the
" brink of the grave. The ſame
" ſentiment will now aſſiſt her
" in conquering an imprudent
" paſſion. I know her ſoul is
" able to triumph over every
" obſtacle to its greatneſs; and
" whilſt her lover is gathering
" laurels in the field, ſhe will

"not be leſs heroic by her vic-
"tory over love.

"Shew me, my dear, that I
"am not miſtaken; every effort
"you make will bear its proper
"value with me.... I will
"not hurry you into diſſipation,
"for I would have your cure the
"perfected work of reaſon, not
"the half-finiſhed one of plea-
"ſure.——There was a time when
"the company of your father
"made you happy; that time,
"I am ſure, will come again,
"and I will wait its return
"with patience."

Was this kindneſs, my dear-eſt Fanny, to be reſiſted? My heart told me it was not; and I obeyed

obeyed its dictates in saying—— Yes, my dear father, that time must come again: even at this hour, when plunged into the depth of melancholy, I feel its approaches.—Your daughter will atone for the indiscretion that has given you pain—she will henceforth be directed by you in every movement of her heart; it shall not beat but at your command..... After expressing all that parental tenderness could utter, he quitted the room in order to allow me leisure to recover my exhausted strength...

Ah! my Fanny, no sooner had the agitation subsided, which this discourse had caused, than the

idea of my Auguſtus deſtroyed again all the pious purpoſes I had made, and my ſoul owned no power but his.—Even at this time it rebels againſt the authority that would baniſh him from my remembrance, and threatens to take its flight with him——would it would do ſo! then ſhould your Emma die conſtant to her duty and her love. . . . .

My father ſpends days in reading to me, in playing at cards with me, in a hundred unavailing endeavours to amuſe me: he is not well himſelf; theſe ſhocking ſcenes have been too much for his ſhattered frame.—Heaven

preſerve

preſerve this moſt precious of lives! A fear of its being in danger makes me more wretched than all my former calamities.——Join with me, my friend, in praying for its ſafety.

It has taken me three days to write this letter, which is ſo blotted by falling *drops*, that you will ſcarcely be able to read it; but it goes, to ſhow you are ſtill remembered by

Your

EMMA EGERTON.

Miſs THORNTON to Miſs EGERTON.

LETTER XVIII.

The Grove.

WERE you leſs ſenſible of your father's kindneſs, my deareſt Emma, I ſhould not add my opinion to his, concluding your heart could not be ſuſceptible of a juſt ſentiment—but the impreſſion his words made on you flatters me with hopes of being liſtened to, not becauſe I can talk like him; but being actuated by the ſame motives, I depend on the ſame treatment for the ſake of my intention.

intention. If I cannot quote my own experience to give weight to what I ſay, I have at leaſt ſeen things by the diſpaſſionate light of reaſon, and truſt to your partiality for giving ſolidity to my arguments, where they are of themſelves deficient.

On finding your fortune ſo much ſmaller than I imagined it, I ſpoke my apprehenſions in a perplexed and confuſed manner; I had not got over my ſurpriſe at the intelligence Sidney had given me—I feared, but I could not tell what, or why—in that way, I could only caution you againſt hurrying into matrimony.—Your anſwer to that let-

ter was filled with ſophiſtry—you brought facts to diſprove my aſſertions—you loved, and ſpoke as a perſon who did ſo—I found the abſurdity of oppoſing reaſon to paſſion——I deſiſted, and waited the event with impatience.—The regard I had for you both, made me anxious, in the higheſt degree, to learn your deſtiny... I heard of it with the utmoſt concern; and giving way to my pity, I forgot every objection which diſcretion had raiſed to your union; and from my ſoul I wiſhed it to take place.——Recovering a little from the firſt ſenſations, I began to reflect more deeply, and am now convinced

vinced that the preſent diſtreſs of my friends will conduce to their future proſperity..... I will leave Auguſtus to reap the fruits of his valour, and confine myſelf only to my Emma's ſhare of the profits that may be derived from her misfortunes.

You cannot but ſuppoſe me, my dear girl, to be above every mean wiſh for ſuperfluous riches; it is one of the laſt thoughts that would enter my mind: a thouſand cares and vexations attend it, and ſwell the account we ſhall have to render hereafter of our paſt lives. "Great wealth "is a great evil;" that's beyond a doubt—but what a diſtance is

there between this ſtate, and the ſmall income you would have ſhared! Extremes are equally to be ſhunned; poverty is not leſs dangerous to our peace, than immenſe riches.—Granting that education creates moſt of our wants, that nature requires little for its ſupport, and love ſtill leſs, as they tell us; does not education become a ſecond nature? and have you been brought up to live on a little?——And where ſhall we ſee an inſtance of this love, which can ſtand the rude ſhocks of indigence, after having lived in affluence?—It may exiſt in a cottage, but it muſt have been bred there; for it will not,

I promiſe you, condeſcend to go from the ſtately dome to the ſtraw-built ſhed—it muſt breathe its native air; and even that will not, without uncommon care, keep it long alive..... This is a part of the miſeries, and perhaps the ſmalleſt part too, that would have been your portion.—The indifference of an huſband, ſhocking as the idea is, would be leſs ſo than to ſee him in agonies when he found it impoſſible to ſupport his family; to meet him always repining, uneaſy, wiſhing a period to his own exiſtence.—Can there be in nature a more dreadful misfortune, than that of cauſing

the

the miſery of thoſe we love? —Such, my friend, muſt have been yours. . . . .

Conſider well what is ſaid to you by two of the moſt diſintereſted people who could have ſpoken to you; your father, and your Fanny: ſtrive againſt this unhappy attachment; if you are willing to vanquiſh, you muſt be ſucceſsful. The greateſt difficulties are to be overcome by reſolution—it requires all yours to deſtroy this favorite paſſion; but your fame will be proportioned to your conqueſt—that it may ſpeedily arrive at its greateſt height, is the firſt wiſh of

Your truly affectionate

F. THORNTON.

Col. SUTTON to W. WALPOLE, Eſq.

LETTER XIX.

Bond-Street.

HE who truſts in woman ſhall be deceived. . . . . This obſervation is almoſt as old as the world, and will hold good unto the end of it.

You were miſtaken, Walpole, in imagining I lived in Miſs Courtney's ſmiles; that was an an happineſs not decreed for me: Sir Lionel Cowper has baſked too long in the bright ſunſhine of her favor, to leave one warming beam for me. . . .

The

The firſt line of my letter tells you I have been deceived; the following ones will explain how.

I left Beresford's, as I mentioned I intended doing, and poſted away to Waterlands, *on the wings of love*: I travelled at the rate of ten miles an hour, yet curſed the poſtillions during every ſtage for not driving faſter. Night overtook me near Grantham, and obliged me to put up there. I had not been long in the inn when Murray came in. Seeing him alight from his carriage, as I ſtood at the window, I went out to him: we were both glad of the meeting, and

agreed

agreed to ſpend the evening together.—I found he was juſt come from Percy's, having been with the reſt of his friends to pay him a viſit on his nuptials.—The common enquiry of What news? came of courſe—he had none, he ſaid, unleſs it was a ridiculous incident that had occaſioned a good deal of buſtle at Waterlands.—I aſked to hear it, little dreaming what it would diſcloſe—"Was Harriet Courtney with "Mrs. Percy when you were "there?" demanded he.—*O yes*, replied I, as if I had been crier to a court of juſtice.——"Well, "if you know her," continued he, "you know the arranteſt

"coquette

" coquette this day in England;
" and you will enjoy her morti-
" fication."—I had ſome doubts
of this laſt; but thoſe I kept to
myſelf, ſo that I gave no inter-
ruption to his harangue, *only* by
cautioning him not make too
free with her, for ſhe was my
particular friend.—" Then I have
" done," ſaid he bowing, " and
" beg your pardon for what has
" already eſcaped me." *It* had
been ſufficient to rouſe my cu-
rioſity: he tried to turn the
converſation, but I always came
back to the ſame point: he in
politeneſs ſtill declined it, but
finding at length that he had
gone too far to come off—" I'll
" tell

" tell you what, Sutton," cried he, " all I ſay I will juſtify: " you are well acquainted with " my character, and may be able " to gueſs that I would not ad- " vance a falſehood from malice. " To attack the reputation of a " woman, merely to indulge " ill-humor, has always been, " in my opinion, the worſt " ſpecies of cowardice: as de- " fenceleſs beings, they claim " the protection of every man; " and I would as ſoon ſtab an " unarmed enemy, as hurt the " good name of any female. " What I was going to relate " was the diſappointment of a " lady, whoſe ſanguine hopes

" had

"had rendered her liable to de-
"ception: I took you to be
"an indifferent perſon in the
"affair, who would have laugh-
"ed with the reſt of the world
"at the ſtory. Your warmth,
"on the mention of Miſs Court-
"ney's name, has ſhown me
"that you will not bear to hear
"her made a ſubject of ridicule:
"I ſhould be loth to quarrel
"with you for a jeſt; therefore
"let the matter end here:
"you may hear of it from
"others, when it may come
"with more propriety than it
"can from me."——I felt no very pleaſing emotions whilſt he continued ſpeaking: to know there

was

was *a ſtory*, yet not to be able to learn what it was, was enough to make one ſuſpect the worſt. This was reducing me to the moſt deplorable ſituation; and I could not endure the thoughts of remaining in it a moment longer than was neceſſary to form the reſolution of inſiſting on Murray's telling me the whole, and promiſing to hear him without reſentment, as I knew him to be a man of ſtrict honor, and one who would not deviate from truth:——he ſtill excuſed himſelf, until, tired out by my importunities, he gave me the ſucceeding narrative.

"Some little while ago, du-

"ring

" ring my visit to the Percys,
" Sir Lionel Cowper, who has
" not been long in England,
" from whence, I suppose, he
" might originally have departed
" with about ten ideas, not five
" of which now remain, though
" the whole of his possessions of
" that kind, came to pay his
" compliments to that family;
" and Miss Courtney, being the
" only disengaged woman there,
" was the only one, who, ac-
" cording to the custom of this
" country, could take as much
" notice of him as the puppy
" expected.—You remember, Sut-
" ton, you are not to be offended
" at what I say: but Harriet,

" who

" who *is at all,* did not miſs ſo
" favorable an opportunity of
" gaining an admirer: the whole
" artillery of her charms was
" played off upon him, and in
" leſs than two days there was
" ſo good an underſtanding be-
" tween them, ſuch familiar nods,
" ſuch expreſſive looks, and ſuch
" frequent whiſperings, that one
" might have ſworn they had been
" acquainted for years. I fancied
" the Baronet was fairly caught—
" I told her as much—ſhe did
" not contradict it; for ſhe thought
" ſo herſelf, and had, I dare ſay,
" already taken upon her, in her
" own imagination, the diſpoſal
" of his fortune, and ſaw the

bloody

" *bloody hand* on her carriages and " plate, and new pleaſures break- " ing in upon her every day."— Pooh! muttered I peviſhly, what's all this to the purpoſe?—It is hardly poſſible to gueſs at thoughts. " Not ſo very difficult," returned he, " when the head that forms " them is not a very profound " one——but you forget your " promiſe—ſuch another *pooh!* " will ſtrike me dumb."—You ſhall hear no more of them, an- anſwered I; but, go on.—" Then, " as I was ſaying, the moſt vio- " lent intimacy ſubſiſted between " them; but no bliſs is perma- " nent in this life—Sir Lionel " began to hint his deſign of

" leaving

" leaving us: he was preſſed to
" ſtay a few days more; but
" *urgent buſineſs*, the common-
" place with all *fine gentlemen*,
" made it impoſſible for him to
" be *ſo happy*. The night be-
" fore he was to depart, I over-
" heard him tell Miſs Courtney
" he ſhould be exceedingly in-
" debted to her, if ſhe would
" favor him with half an hour's
" converſation before he went
" off: he had ſomething of
" conſequence to ſay to her.—It
" was agreed, that ſhe ſhould
" meet him at ſeven o'clock the
" next morning, as he was to
" go before the reſt of the fa-
" mily was ſtirring.——Harriet

" now

" now made ſure of receiving
" this long-expected *tender*:
" punctual to her aſſignation, ſhe
" got up, and found her ſwain
" waiting her coming, which
" was no ſooner accompliſhed,
" than he in the plaineſt terms
" propoſed to make her miſtreſs
" of himſelf and his fortune,
" provided ſhe would diſpenſe
" with the *antiquated* ceremony
" of marriage and perpetual en-
" ſlavement.—This was a ſtroke
" which ſhe was not prepared
" for; and after rejecting with
" *indignation* (according to her
" own account) his inſolence,
" ſhe upbraided him with hav-
" ing deceived her with falſe
" appearances:

" appearances: but from this
" charge he exculpated himſelf,
" by vowing he loved her very
" ſincerely, and renewed his offers
" to confirm what he ſaid;
" but he could not help it, if
" they had miſunderſtood each
" other: his were what *he*
" called *honorable* propoſals, and
" if ſhe had affixed any other
" meaning to the expreſſion, he
" was not to blame; matrimony
" was the laſt folly he ſhould
" be guilty of. And making
" her a low bow, he decamped. . .
" When we aſſembled about
" nine o'clock, no Harriet ap-
" peared. Mrs. Percy rang the
" bell, and ordered a ſervant to

" inform her that breakfaſt was
" ready: he came back ſoon
" after, and reported that Miſs
" Courtney was very ill.—I own
" I took this to be only the
" common effect of parting with
" a lover; but Mrs. Percy having
" left the room on the intel-
" ligence of the footman, ſhortly
" after ſent for her huſband,
" who, when he had been ſome
" time abſent, returned to me,
" execrating the fooliſh girl, and
" the impertinent blockhead who
" had made this *fracas*. She be-
" ing a relation of his wife's,
" made him at firſt reſolve on
" calling Cowper to an account
" for his behaviour: but I re-

" preſented

" preſented to him, as forcibly
" as I could, the abſurdity of
" riſking his life in defence of a
" coquette who had drawn on her-
" ſelf this inſult, and whoſe le-
" vity of conduct muſt eternally
" produce ſuch conſequences;
" that, inexcuſable as Sir Lionel
" was, there was at leaſt as
" much to be urged in his de-
" fence, as in hers; that the
" more private this tranſaction
" was kept, the leſs her repu-
" tation would be injured; that,
" in ſhort, the practice of duel-
" ling had ever ſeemed to me
" to be obliterating one fol-
" ly by the commiſſion of a
" greater..... Reflexion

 " ſtrengthened

" ſtrengthened my remarks; and
" it was reſolved that Harriet
" ſhould be ſent home to her
" father, leſt ſhe ſhould again
" fall into ſuch errors, as their
" houſe was generally full of
" company, and ſhe would have
" more frequent occaſions of flirt-
" ing there than at home.—The
" next day ſhe left Waterlands,
" and no more notice was taken
" of the affair: but our ſecrecy
" was of no kind of uſe; the
" ſtory was known all over the
" country in a week, and has ſerved
" for amuſement to every crea-
" ture, as Harriet has not been
" equal in the diſtribution of her
" civilities, and has conſequently

" as

" as many enemies as ſhe has
" ill-treated acquaintance.——

" I have now, Sutton, finiſhed
" this hiſtory, which you were
" ſo deſirous of hearing; nor have
" I 'aught extenuated, or ſet down
" aught in malice.'——The girl is
" handſome enough to be admired
" by any one: that, I preſume,
" has been the reaſon of your
" wiſhing to know ſo much about
" her; for I cannot perſuade myſelf
" that, with *your ſentiments*, you
" can be ſeriouſly attached to
" her."

This home thruſt diſtreſſed me as much as any part of his relation. I then diſcovered how much I had leſſened myſelf, even

in my own eyes, by this new and unworthy attachment, and for a conſiderable time could not bring myſelf to acknowledge to Murray that I had loved ſuch an object: I evaded his inquiſitive look, but his penetration was not to be ſo foiled; he found out how much intereſted I was about her, and compaſſionating the confuſion he ſaw me in, he added—"But it "is not wonderful that you ſhould "have been impoſed upon by her; "ſhe is perfect in her art, and "underſtands how to adapt her "manners to her company.—You "muſt forgive me, my friend, if "I yet endeavour to open your "eyes, and ſhow her to you in

"her

"her real ſhape: it is a delicate
"point I have undertaken; but,
"to ſave you from perdition, no-
"thing ſhould deter me. Did you
"ever ſee her before you went
"to Waterlands?"—Never; and
have not paſſed more than five
weeks with her, anſwered I;
but during that time I ſaw no-
thing in her behaviour but what was
perfectly conſonant to the moſt
rigid rules of decorum.—"*You*
"*ſaw!* you ſhould rather have
"ſaid you could *not* ſee; for par-
"tiality had blinded you, (retorted
"he;) you were acquainted with
"her for five weeks, and loved
"her very likely from the firſt hour
"of that period. I have known

" her theſe four years, and never
" having loved her, I think my-
" ſelf much better qualified to
" draw her picture. Believe me
" when I tell you ſhe is a com-
" poſition of vanity, affectation,
" and deceit; that under the ap-
" pearance of giddineſs ſhe hides
" the moſt refined ſtratagems;
" that ſhe would ſacrifice the man
" who loves her, at any time, in
" order to attach one who is in-
" different to her. To my certain
" knowledge, ſhe has ſerved more
" than one ſo. Conqueſt is her
" ambition, and tyranny her de-
" light. When I firſt knew her,
" I was a younger brother, and
" not at all *the thing* with her;

" ſhe

" ſhe looked much higher. I was
" therefore, as an unconcerned ſpec-
" tator, at liberty to obſerve all
" her windings and turnings; and
" in the courſe of my acquaint-
" ance I never met with a more
" intricate character; for ſhe has
" not ſenſe enough to be fixed in
" her taſte, or principle enough
" to be conſtant to her promiſes.
" She would have married the
" young fool who has juſt left her,
" becauſe his rank in life would
" have ſuited her notions: but the
" man himſelf was as inſignificant
" to her as any other.—Theſe are
" ungrateful truths, my dear Sut-
" ton, to you; but it is better you
" ſhould be appriſed of them from

 " me,

"me, than from your own ex-
"perience."———I agreed with Murray in this, and thanking him for his ſincerity and friendſhip, I awaked as it were out of a dream, which had miſled me for the laſt two months of my life; and having determined on making trial of the extent of her *art*, I told him I would go on to Percy's, and, when there, would ſee whether Miſs Courtney would take notice of my keeping my appointment with her; and, if ſhe did, how ſhe would act in conſequence of it: if ſhe did not keep to her engagement, by coming or ſending to me, I ſhould retire without ſhowing the leaſt ſymptoms

of

of my diſappointment or reſentment. . . . . The next morning we took our different routes. When I got to Waterlands, I found the houſe ſtill crouded with viſitors: no mention was made of Harriet; but the day after I got there, I received a letter from her, regretting the impoſſibility of her coming over, as her father had company, which ſhe was forced to entertain; but giving me an invitation to their houſe. This I anſwered, by apologizing for not being able to attend her there; and this produced another epiſtle from her, in which, after reproaching me with the coldneſs of mine, ſhe proceeds (on a ſuppoſition of my having heard

heard *ſome abſurd* reports concerning her) to aſſure me, that what had been called a flirtation between Sir Lionel Cowper and her, had been nothing more than what, in her *gaïété de cœur*, ſhe ſhould have done in my preſence, and that he had only returned her *innocent* notice with the common attentions of a man of gallantry; that the country was always famous for ſcandalous ſtories; but that, as ſhe perceived much circumſpection was neceſſary to eſcape cenſure, ſhe was now convinced of her former imprudence; and, as ſhe ſaw her errors, ſhe ſhould avoid them henceforwards.——A few lines conveyed my *reponſe*:

they

they were theſe.—" Colonel Sut-
" ton preſents his compliments to
" Miſs Courtney: he too *ſees* his
" errors; and as they are both ſo
" *clear-ſighted*, they may poſſibly
" diſcover too many faults in each
" other, ſhould they meet again:
" therefore he ſhall cautiouſly avoid
" appearing in her ſight any more."

I waited ſome days after this, without hearing any thing more of her, and then ſet out for London. The dear Priſcy Neville now engaging all my ideas, I ſoon forgot my little jilt, and, I aſſure you, never once meditated a *deſperate action* on finding I had loſt her. . . . . I have been ſome time here, without having yet had courage enough to preſent

ſent myſelf at Miſs Neville's door; nor dare I even ſend to her, for fear of receiving a prohibition to my viſits.

But I have already ſwelled this to the ſize of a volume, and will not add more to it than the uſual ſignature of

GEORGE SUTTON.

Mr. WALPOLE to Col. SUTTON.

LETTER XX.

Spring-Park.

UPON my ſoul, George, you have ſhown yourſelf to be complete maſter of your paſſions. So you actually refuſed

to

to ſee Miſs Courtney, after going more than eighty miles with no other intent; and you aſſure me you are returned without the leaſt deſign of committing a raſh deed in your deſpair!—This is more than Roman virtue, and worthy of a *Britiſh Colonel*.—I love the man who can practiſe ſuch heroiſm, and not, by cringing and fawning, gratify the wiſhes of a coquette. You know my averſion to that order of beings; I can hardly ſuppoſe them entitled to the common rights of humanity, deſtructive as they are to the peace of mankind.—I have always looked upon the ſtory of the Sphinx to have been the allegorical deſcrip-

tion

tion of ſome Theban coquette, who by her charms firſt enſnared, and then betrayed to ruin, all who came near her.——The poetical monſter repreſents the qualities of the human one in the figurative ſtyle of the ancients: thus the face of a virgin denotes the beauty of her; the wings of a bird, her volatile diſpoſition; the body of a dog, her want of delicacy; the claws of a lion, her power of doing miſchief; and laſtly, her conduct is a riddle, more difficult to expound than any that has been yet invented.——You will certainly allow of this explanation, who have been ſo long under the dominion of that arch-flirt, Harriet

riet Courtney, and have known each point to be juſt, excepting *her power of doing miſchief*, which you eſcaped by a timely retreat. . . . . .

Your example ſhould be a warning to me, had I not choſen a miſtreſs ſo oppoſite to yours in every thing but lovelineſs: mild, artleſs, and ſenſible; ſuch as would make any man bleſſed, who ſhall have the happineſs of being beloved by her. Whether this will be my fate or not, Heaven knows; but of this I am ſure, that nothing ſhall be untried on my part, which can render me deſerving of her favor.——We break up to-morrow; my gueſts diſperſing

diſperſing themſelves various ways, and I bending *my way* towards Burton.

I am not quite in the ſecret about Miſs Neville, but I *feel* as if you had acted wrong there: I remember you uſed to talk to me continually of her at one time; nay, you were conſtantly at her elbow when ſhe appeared in public, and the charming Priſcy was your firſt toaſt.—I was to have been introduced to her, but ſome accident or other always prevented it.——This is a woman that, "with your ſentiments," as Murray ſays, I ſhould have ſet down for you to be "ſeriouſly attached "to."—Not ſuppoſing you ſo great

great a philoſopher in *diſappoint-ments*, I dreaded your forming a connexion of the ſort; but after what has juſt happened, I ſhall never have any more fears about you: ſo, if you can obtain for-giveneſs for having loved a leſs deſerving woman, (which, may I be ſhot if I would grant you, were I Miſs Neville) you have my conſent to enter into new en-gagements as ſoon as you pleaſe: we all love to be kept in counte-nance upon theſe occaſions; and your being of *the tribe* will be great conſolation to

Yours,

WILLIAM WALPOLE.

Miſs

Miſs EGERTON to Miſs THORNTON.

LETTER XXI.

Sunbury.

DISEASES of the body are more eaſily cured, my dear Fanny, than thoſe of the mind. Returning ſtrength declares my fever gone: that has yielded to the ſkill of the phyſicians, whilſt the healing balſam of reaſon has been in vain applied to the malady which preys upon the other. Nature has given me a ſtrong conſtitution, with a weak heart: the one has baffled all the attacks of ſickneſs; but its feeble companion

panion is ſinking under the weight of its woes, and ſighs hourly for its deliverance from the cares of this gloomy ſtate.—Youth is not always a deſirable thing, ſince it does not preſerve us from miſery, and may keep us long in it, by its unwillingneſs to part with life.

Do not, my friend, call me inſenſible for not having yet made ſuch good uſe of your counſels as might have been expected; time alone can render me calm enough to taſte the ſweets of *prudential* maxims: have patience yet a little longer with me, I know that I ſhall at laſt be what you would have me; but there are many ſtruggles to be ſuſtained before the

happy

happy æra of tranquillity can arrive to one who has felt like me! . . . . . .

We had a viſit to-day from Lady Catharine and Miſs Biſhop: it is the firſt time I have ſeen them for theſe ſix weeks; and I obſerved evident marks of ſurpriſe in their faces when they entered, from the alteration in my perſon.—Though Lady Catharine kindly endeavoured to inſpire me with all imaginable hopes of *recovery*, how unlikely theſe to contribute to my felicity! But of that no more. . . .

Kitty tells me Mr. Walpole is to be with them again in a few days. After we had ſpoken of him very highly for ſome minutes, ſhe expreſſed

expreſſed hopes of his having got over ſome of his *refinements*, after having ſo long converſed with *gay* men, who are but ſeldom troubled with ſuch *niceneſs*.——"For ex-
"ample, (continued this vivacious
"talker) can it be believed, that
"any rake in the world would
"object to a woman for having
"loved another man before ſhe
"knew himſelf? This would be
"expecting the purity of Veſtals,
"which would but ill agree with
"their groſs inclinations. From
"ſuch aſſociates then I flatter
"myſelf that Walpole will imbibe
"better notions than thoſe he
"had: this will be of a piece
"with the reſt of his *ſingularities*;
"for

" for not a creature but himſelf
" could improve by bad com-
" pany.——Have you ever heard
" him ſpeak of what he calls
" *female delicacy* ? He has thoughts
" on that ſubject more fine-ſpun
" than any thread in Arachne's
" web."———I told her I had heard him expatiate with great vehemence on the deficiency of ſome of the ſex in that point.——
" Deficiency !" returned ſhe, my dear Emma, " ſhe muſt be ſome-
" thing more than woman, who
" is not deficient in his opinion.—
" He carries the joke ſo far, that
" if a girl, in the ſimplicity of
" her heart, is ſtruck with an
" handſome figure, and exclaims,

" O

" O what a charming man! ſhe
" is immediately degraded from
" her natural claim to *delicacy*,
" with him.—If a woman poſſeſſ-
" ed of every grace and virtue
" were to inſpire him with love,
" and he ſhould diſcover that ſhe
" had ever been attached to ano-
" ther, he declares he would ra-
" ther fall a victim to his *tendreſſe*,
" than deign to accept a heart
" which had palpitated for ano-
" ther; pretending to advance
" that our affections, like our
" cloaths, wear out by uſe.—Theſe
" are but few of his *curious* tenets
" in regard to us; but they are
" ſo characteriſtic of the man,
" that I need mention no more.—

"I have done all I could to teach "him better things, but without "any effect: he has a great deal "of his father's *oddities* in him."— At the concluſion of this, the coach coming to the door, our agreeable friends took their leave, after promiſing to give frequent calls at Sunbury, now they could be admitted.

My father's health does not mend——I have terrors when I reflect on this circumſtance, which would drive me into madneſs, were I not to check the firſt approaches of them.—Should he!—but this would be the final blow——we ſhould both fall together, and flying to the peaceful Aſylum of the

the Unfortunate, forget all paſs'd ſorrows——O for ſuch a ſleep! "It is a conſumation devoutly "to be wiſh'd." . . . . . .

But you will chide me, Fanny: I have none of that philoſophic ſpirit which you ſuppoſed me once poſſeſſed of; but, with all my ſex's ſoftneſs, have a double portion of its frailty: will you not then give me up, as being compoſed of materials too ſlight to raiſe me to the height you ſpoke of?—Do not, I beſeech you, low as I am, think me leſs ſincerely

Yours,

EMMA EGERTON.

From the SAME to the SAME.

LETTER XXII.

Sunbury.

WHERE will my afflictions end!——and when ſhall the wretched Emma again find eaſe? My prophetic fears have proved too true; my dear father will ſoon be torn from me—every day increaſes his danger.——Why does not fate accept my proffered life for his?—But this cruel complaint, which has ſo long hung upon him, will not quit its hold: he is pronounced, by the beſt of judges, to be in a decay. O my Fanny!

Fanny! until this hour, I have never known ſorrow; all elſe appears trifling to this laſt and greateſt ſtroke!—But let me hope this load of complicated miſchief will at laſt cruſh this little frame, which has ſo long ſtruggled with adverſity, and that the hand of Death will have cloſed my eyes before he has deprived me of the beſt of parents. He ſtill continues to walk about, but with ſuch difficulty to ſupport himſelf, that I am terrified whenever he moves.--He calls for me—I fly, my father, to obey thy welcome ſummons.* *

* * * * * * * * *

New horrors, my dear Fanny, throng about me! I have not

yet regained my ſenſes ſufficiently to relate the converſation we have had..... O my Auguſtus! was it not enough to loſe thee, without being obliged to accept of another lover?—Never will my heart yield to this infidelity—yet have I not ſaid I would? Have I been able to withſtand the intreaties..... "Have I then "no tears for thee, my father? "Can I forget thy cares from "helpleſs years, thy tenderneſs "for me? an eye ſtill beamed "with love! a brow that never "knew a frown! nor a harſh "word thy tongue! Shall I for "theſe repay thy ſtooping, vene-

"rable

" rable age with ſhame, diſquiet,
" anguiſh, and diſhonor?

" It muſt not be!——Thou
" firſt of angels! come, ſweet
" Filial Piety! and firm my breaſt!
" Yes, let one daughter to her
" fate ſubmit; be nobly wretch-
" ed—but her father happy." . . . .
This victim, Fanny, is thy friend.

Mr. Walpole, how little did I imagine his name would ever coſt me a ſigh! He is come to Burton, and come to be—I cannot ſupport the idea. You ſhall hear by what arts I have been drawn in to give my conſent; it was refining upon cruelty to uſe ſuch means.—My father held a

letter in his hand, when I went to him: it was from Mr. Biſhop, who informed him, in the moſt friendly ſtyle, of Mr. Walpole's intention of coming to Sunbury to-morrow morning——Gueſs his errand!—I ſaw pleaſure in my father's face, and without knowing the cauſe my own bore teſtimony of the ſame; I joyed in his.—Ah, to what purpoſe is my heart thus ſuſceptible, but to be the ſport of every paſſion!——"My "Emma," cried my father, "I have "news to tell you, which I truſt "will not be ungrateful to you: "the chearfulneſs I have obſerved "in you lately, bids me to think "you are arrived at the peaceful "ſerenity

" ſerenity I expected you to enjoy:
" my ſoul revives at it, and your
" happineſs will add ſome days
" to my life. This letter in-
" forms me of Mr. Walpole's
" partiality to you."——I ſtarted back, as he reached out the paper to me, and begged not to hear its contents; that I had, in obedience to his orders, baniſhed one lover from my heart, but that no other ſhould ever occupy the place he had been forced from.——" Can you fancy, Em-
" ma, (ſaid he, in a more ſtern
" accent than I had ever known
" him uſe before) that the ful-
" filling one part of your duty
" will ſuffice? will Heaven be

 " ſatisfied

" ſatisfied with half an offer-
" ing?"——Oh! do not, Sir, drive me down the precipice of Deſpair, on the very edge of which I now ſtand ſhuddering!—Heaven requires no more than our imperfect natures can perform: be not you leſs indulgent to your child.——I muſt be unjuſt to Mr. Walpole were I to receive his vows; I muſt be unfaithful to *another* in returning them. Command me to die, I ſhall obey with pleaſure; but I cannot conſent to live in torment.——Will you, my deareſt papa, will you ſee your Emma devoted to deſtruction; and ſhall thy hand give me up towretchedneſs?--In ſaying this

I ſeized that hand, and bedewed it with my tears.—My father was agitated; but he would not ſpeak until he thought I had exhauſted myſelf too much to perſiſt in my refuſal: then riſing, he walked a few paces, and turning to me, "It is well, my dear——I am "contented; my death will ſoon "put an end to the power which "bears ſo hard upon you.—You "will not be without friends: "thoſe at Burton will receive you; "they will be tender to you, and "perhaps dependence may for "once be leſs dreadful than it "has ever yet been.——Yet," rejoined he, after a pauſe, "I did "not think *you* could have ſub-

"mitted

" mitted to ſuch a ſituation. I " even tremble to reflect on the " hardſhips of the moſt eligible " ſtate of dependence; the many " rubs thy heart muſt bear." My father's words chilled my blood; but when he added—" I " do not mean, Emma, to force " you into a marriage ſo repug- " nant to your inclination; you " ſhall determine for yourſelf: " Mr. Walpole's fortune would " be no temptation to me; I would " not wiſh to ſee him your huſ- " band, if I did not know him to " be poſſeſſed of every valuable " quality: beſides, my heart was " fixed on the match; its com- " pletion would have given plea-

" ſure

" ſure to my laſt hours; I ſhould
" have had no fears of death,
" could I have left you ſuch a
" protector—but you refuſe to
" gratify my wiſh; you will not
" let me be happy in this world,
" and your want of duty adds to
" my diſorder, and hurries me into
" the grave before my time"—I heard no more, but falling back in my chair, remained ſenſeleſs for ſome moments: when I opened my eyes, I found my father kneeling, and the firſt ſounds that ſtruck my ear were—" It is thy
" father kneels, my child, and
" begs to be indulged in his re-
" queſt. . . . . .

O my father (cried I, throwing myſelf

myſelf on my knees by him) let us change poſtures; take my ſeat, and let me at your feet implore forgiveneſs—Now indeed you have been cruel to your daughter; any argument but this might have been withſtood—but now I have nothing more to ſay; your will ſhall be mine—take my conſent, whilſt I have yet life left to give it.—— Let Mr. Walpole come, he ſhall be heard——but I will tell him how *I have* loved! how obeyed! —" Your conſent then," replied he, " will not avail—you have " given me hope, only to make " me more ſenſible of diſappoint- " ment. No man of delicacy " would accept of your hand on

" the

" the conditions you have men-
" tioned, and Mr. Walpole laſt of
" any: you are no ſtranger to his
" notions, they are *particular*; and
" the only chance you have to
" make me happy is by conceal-
" ing all that has happened, from
" every living creature; let the
" remembrance die, even in your
" own breaſt."——Here I exclaim-
ed, What then, Sir, becomes of
that ſincerity which you have al-
ways taught me to practiſe? Can
I in honor hide from Mr. Walpole
what has paſſed?

My father ſtopped me by ſaying,
" General maxims, my dear Em-
" ma, will not always ſuit parti-
" cular caſes—your ſincerity here

" would

" would anſwer no end, but that
" of diſappointing the man who
" loves you, and of making me
" wretched. . . . . Mr. Walpole,
" I'll be bound for it, would
" prefer being cheated into hap-
" pineſs to being made acquaint-
" ed with your attachment. It
" is not likely, private as the
" affair has been, that any ac-
" cident ſhould diſcover it to him.
" You will not meet the object
" you have loved until you have
" long ceaſed to feel any extra-
" ordinary degree of tenderneſs
" for him: your huſband will be
" dearer to you than any other
" being then; and you will won-
" der, perhaps, that he was not

" always

" always ſo. At your age, child,
" the violence of the paſſions
" prevents their duration: I know
" that this very lover, now ſo
" paſſionately idolized, muſt in
" a ſhort time become indifferent
" to you. Were I not convinced
" of this, believe me, I would
" not beſtow a wife on Mr. Wal-
" pole ſo unworthy of him. The
" thought of your being left in
" a ſtate of dependence would
" not be half ſo ſhocking to me,
" as that of having rendered an
" amiable man miſerable, by giv-
" ing you to him with a heart
" abſolutely devoted to another. . .
" But you aſſured me, you had
" baniſhed Sidney from your
" thoughts;

" thoughts ; and I am convinced
" you have, by the difference
" there is now in your looks.
" Having gained this great point,
" can you, my dear, be ſo cowardly
" as to attempt no more ?"

I proteſted to my father, that I durſt do any thing, except impoſe upon Mr. Walpole ; but that, to remove that difficulty, I would inform him of what had paſſed, in ſuch a way as not to diſguſt him ; and that, if he was really attached to me, his love would get the better of his prejudices, and I ſhould ſecure my future peace by not having any thing to reproach myſelf with.—But this was not

more

more perſuaſive than what I had firſt ſaid; my father declaring, that I deceived myſelf in ſuppoſing I could depend ſo much upon my power over Mr. Walpole; that he had ſtudied human nature, and had always found it more difficult to make a man renounce his prejudices than his faith, being more wedded to ideas of his own forming than to any others; that the more unreaſonable the thing was, the more unlikely it was it ſhould be removed by rational arguments; that after a courſe of years, ſpent in a ſtrict adherence to all the duties of a good wife, I might hope to have ſuch a

ſway

ſway over him, as to reform his judgement in theſe matters. "Be it your care, my child, to act ſo as to give conſequence to all you ſay, and your influence will be powerful; but your behaviour, and not your beauty, will ſecure it. I ſhall not look upon your conſent to ſee Mr. Walpole as any thing, unleſs you alſo promiſe ſolemnly not to acquaint him with Auguſtus's love." To enforce this, he again employed all the reſiſtleſs eloquence of paternal tenderneſs. I promiſed, my dear Fanny; I could not refuſe any thing that would make *my father happy*: I left *him* quite eaſy—and will not this content my

my reſtleſs ſoul?——Ah! no, degenerate as it is, it dreads being "nobly wretched."——— But its fears cannot recall the dire ſentence: that being paſſed, death, or reſignation to its fate, muſt be the conſequence.

To-morrow!—how ſwift the hours fly which are to determine my lot!—O come, filial obedience, to ſtrengthen my failing courage!——it demands all thy wonderous power to enable me to perform the taſk of duty.

My father ſilenced, but he has not convinced me: *concealment* ſtill appears to be contrary to juſtice.—I dare not reflect

flect more on this point, leſt, following the dictates of ſincerity, I ſhould blaſt all the hope I have raiſed. . . . . If it be poſſible, my friend, ſay ſomething to reconcile me to myſelf, for at preſent all is anarchy and confuſion in the boſom of

Thy

EMMA EGERTON.

Mr.

Mr. WALPOLE to Col. SUTTON.

LETTER XXIII.

Burton.

HAVING had no rival to apprehend, no capricious parent or guardian to deal with, on my coming here laſt week I made known to this family my deſign of applying for Miſs Egerton, and had the pleaſure of having it received with every teſtimony of approbation; every one joining in pronouncing her to be the moſt unexceptionable of all womankind. I did not require this to fix my reſolution; yet

yet there is ſomething very pleaſing in having one's choice approved of. You, who are fond of inveſtigating cauſes, will, I make no doubt, place this to the account of ſelf-love, as it is a flattering proof of the goodneſs of one's taſte: but do you ſeek for *cauſes*; I am ſatisfied with feeling the *effects*. The next day I ſpoke to my divine Emma, and, with her leave, to Mr. Egerton: my propoſals were accepted, and things are in a train for my becoming a Benedict in a hurry. Is liberty to be regretted, when we ſacrifice it to ſuch a goddeſs? but how can you anſwer that, who

who have never ſeen my Emma?

I found great alterations on my return to Sunbury: Sidney is gone to Ruſſia, to ſeek "the bubble Reputation even in a cannon's mouth:" Mr. Egerton is far gone in a decline, and my charming girl has been extremely ill ſince I went from hence: Lady Catharine appriſed me of this; and lucky was it that I had been ſo prepared, for ſhe is changed beyond imagination, and is now only the ſhadow of that beauteous form which uſed to be ſo much admired.—But it was not "a ſet of features, or complexion," that enchanted me; I

loved the ſoul which animated her fine countenance, that yet appears, and bids defiance to care and ſickneſs. Her anxiety on her father's illneſs is never leſſened; ſhe watches his looks; her whole attention is engroſſed by him, and ſhe can hardly find time to thank me when I join in her attendance on him, and by my aſſiduities ſeem to partake in her concern. The departure of Sidney has been ſeverely felt by both the father and daughter; Emma wept for the friend of her infancy; Mr. Egerton mourned the child of his adoption, the ſon of his Sidney.—Lady Catharine tells me he is grown viſibly

worſe

worſe ſince this event took place: I do not approve of the young hero's leaving England at this time; though he certainly had no idea of Mr. Egerton's danger then, and the calls of honor muſt be obeyed. Thus much for his excuſe; and may victory attend his ſteps!——

The gentle Emma, ſo formed for love, is not yet brought to return mine as ſhe ſhould do: a prey to grief, ſhe does not attend to any other ſentiment—but as her coldneſs is not the effect of prepoſſeſſion in another's favor, or averſion to me, but the conſequence of a ſorrow reſpectable in itſelf; as it proves

the greatneſs and juſtneſs of her ſenſibility, it adds value to the heart I would gain. The death of her father will leave her leiſure for love: her manner aſſures me that my fondneſs will be repaid, as ſoon as ſhe can forget her loſs: it may be a work of time to accompliſh that; but when the hour does arrive, I ſhall be amply rewarded for my patience: that it will come, cannot be a dubious matter, ſince her heart cannot be inſenſible, or my paſſion abate. I am importunate to have an early day named for her becoming mine, as I ſhall then never leave her to ſuſtain alone the melancholy office

office of watching over her dieing parent. Mr. Egerton joins his prayers to mine, as he finds himſelf going faſt, and would fain leave her in ſafety before that. . . . . .

The ſad ſcene makes an impreſſion on me, which even my approaching happineſs cannot efface. I come back to Burton, after viſiting my beloved, ſo low and dejected, that a ſtranger to my real circumſtances would conclude me to be a diſcarded lover on the point of dangling from a willow-bough. Kitty applauds what ſhe calls my *humanity* (much of that, to be ſure, in ſympathizing with a miſtreſs in diſtreſs)

but wiſhes I would forget a little of it, when I leave Sunbury, for ſhe cannot bear the *diſmals*: no one feels more for their friends than ſhe does; but as her ſenſations are violent, they are not laſting. She would not make a wife for me, with this diſpoſition; give me one who is not eaſily caught, but, being once attached, will be ſo for ever. This makes me ſatisfied with my Emma's ſlow progreſs in love: her heart, leſs *inflammable*, will be more entirely warmed: ſhe is not verſed in the common knowledge of girls of her age, who generally have more lovers than years to count; I ſhall be the firſt

who

who teaches her *la lingua d'amore.*— What joy will it be to hear my lovely ſcholar utter ſentiments which only I have inſpired! I do not believe, George, that I ſhall be a jealous huſband; but I know I ſhall be exceedingly delicate in my notions of a wife's behaviour: ſhe who pretends to charm me as ſuch, muſt have all the amiability of Miſs Egerton: ſhe conſents to be mine, and ſecures the bliſs of

Yours,

WILLIAM WALPOLE.

Miſs EGERTON to Miſs THORNTON.

LETTER XXIV.

Sunbury.

THEY are in ſuch a hurry to finiſh this marriage, that I am ſcarcely permitted to think on what I am going to undertake. Perhaps, my deareſt Fanny, it is beſt policy not to give me time for reflexion. O what an horrible thought is that! Have I then reaſon to fear reflexion?--does not this imply guilt? The upright mind can bear to ſearch into the hidden corners; it can ſtand the teſt of ſelf-examination—

examination—what then is mine, which ſhuns itſelf, and turns with horror from the view?—I dare not, my friend, deſire you to anſwer this queſtion for me—my conſcious ſoul already does it.—But a few weeks ſince Auguſtus left me; and here am I on the eve of vowing to another that conſtancy which only he can claim.—Can I do it?—Fond fool as I am, my heart miſleads me—I had no right to promiſe him; and he who has the diſpoſal of me, has ordained me to quit this choſen object.——Juſt Heaven, aſſiſt me! ſince it is in obedience to thy great command, I yield up the mor-

tal deareſt to me! Bleſs *him* with every good!—may his ſoul never feel the pangs of mine!——may he live to enjoy that happineſs, which the loſt Emma can never find on earth!.....

Is it thus I prepare myſelf to become a bride? does not Mr. Walpole merit an undivided heart?——He does, and mine henceforwards muſt be wholly his.—Generous, tender, and deſerving as he is, he demands all the love I can beſtow——that, alas! how ſmall a portion for worth like his!——Still does this raſh paſſion mingle itſelf in every thought. I meant, my friend, never more to have mentioned

the

the name of Auguſtus; but no ſooner did I take up my pen, than it became marked on the paper, and the weak Emma had not reſolution enough to eraſe it.—I could almoſt believe we have two ſouls in each body, elſe whence come theſe oppoſite deſires, theſe different wiſhes?—But do they not rather belong to one and the ſame? ſo many ſure proofs of its frailty.

My father grows worſe every hour——I cannot ſupport the thought of his dieing, and therefore indulge any that delivers me from this terrible one.——— He fainted this morning whilſt I was ſitting by him: frightened,

nearly

nearly diſtracted, I ran into the hall, where I met Mr. Walpole juſt coming to enquire about him. Never did he appear ſo pleaſing to me; my terror affected him— I could not ſpeak; but catching hold of his arm, I led him to the next room, where we found my father recovered from his fit: joy at ſeeing him alive, made me more than commonly attentive to my lover: I thanked him for his well-timed viſit, told him his was the moſt welcome face I could have ſeen, and in ſhort gave him many aſſurances of my preference. He looked happy; my father rejoiced in ſeeing it; and the idea of having done right

made

made me for ſome hours fancy I was ſo too.

There is no higher pleaſure than that of contributing to the felicity of others—it is a conſolation, which yet is left for me: I will then forget *ſelf*, and be ſatisfied with the ſublimer power of beſtowing happineſs on others. There is a grandeur in that thought, which raiſes me above all meaner conſiderations, and carries me at once to the height of my ambition.

Before this reaches you, I ſhall no longer bear the name of Egerton.—There can be no parade at ſuch a time as this—you will believe that I am not concerned

at

at this circumſtance: I could not, I am afraid, ſupport the loud mirth ſo uſual on ſuch occaſions; and all my boaſted *greatneſs* would forſake me in the midſt of noiſy rejoicings.

The late Mr. Walpole left his eſtate ſo tied down, that it would take up too much time to have proper ſettlements drawn up; theſe are to be made hereafter, it ſeems: this prevents the delay of lawyers, and favors the impatience of my friends. It is immaterial to me what proviſion is made for me, hoping that I ſhall not long ſtand in need of the goods of this world... But beware, Emma, of falling

again

again into the ſtate thou haſt juſt quitted! Remember, but three days are allowed, before thou art ſummoned to the altar with the man whom thou wilt ſwear to love.—Let his image then reign in thy heart, and, excepting thy Fanny, give him no rival there.—Let tenderneſs juſtify the deceit which duty has commanded, and teach Walpole, that ſhe who has loved one worthy being, may be equally attached to another.

Aſk of Heaven, my Fanny, to ſtrengthen me, and make me able to perform the nobleſt of efforts; that of conquering our paſſions, in ſubmiſſion to its laws.

Adieu

Adieu! I will no longer venture to dwell on this theme, for fear of treſpaſſing a third time againſt the virtue I have embraced: I never can againſt the friendſhip I owe you, my dear, but muſt ever remain

Your affectionate

EMMA EGERTON.

Miſs BISHOP to Miſs THORNTON.

LETTER XXV.

OUR friend, my dear Miſs Thornton, is too much taken up with her various employments, to write to you now; and as I judged of *your impatience* by

by my own, I reſolved that you ſhould not be long uninformed of the new name which ſhe took upon her three days ago; and making all proper allowances for the ſhortneſs of the time, ſhe already anſwers very readily to it. I aſſuredly have helped to make her ſo well uſed to it, as I am every moment calling out *Mrs. Walpole*, as much from my paſſion for novelty, as from my not being able to ſtir without her in this *dull* place.

Have you ever been at a wedding, Miſs Thornton? I never was before; nor do I ever wiſh to be again, unleſs it agrees better with my notions of one, than

than this did.—Poor Mr. Egerton's illneſs rendered it improper to have any company but our family invited to it: I knew this; but ſtill my head was ſo ſtuffed with the deſcriptions which my old nurſe uſed to give of the feſtivity of ſuch a day, that I could not bring myſelf to imagine this would be one of the moſt woeful I had ever ſeen. The firſt diſappointment I met with was in ſeeing Emma pale, trembling, and ready to faint more than once during the ceremony: having always heard a vaſt deal of her exceſſive timidity, I was convinced this had occaſioned all theſe tremors, &c. and ſtill hoped that

when

when we got home, there would be an end of all theſe uncomfortable ways. In this I was much deceived; for we had not been a great while in the houſe, before Emma retired with my mother: we waited in expectation of their re-appearance; but finding they did not make it, Walpole propoſed, that he and I ſhould ſeek his bride and my mother. We ſet out accordingly, and after ſome ſearch, diſcovered they were in the dreſſing-room: in we bounced; but I quickly wiſhed myſelf out again; for Emma was in a flood of tears, and Lady Catharine in deep diſcourſe. Walpole was alarmed, and eagerly enquired

enquired into the ſubject of her grief. My mother, the common friend of both, told him, that Mrs. Walpole had been talking of her father's ſituation until ſhe had wrought herſelf into an agony about it. He went up to her, intreating her to be comforted; and added, that he flattered himſelf ſhe would not on *that day* indulge more ſorrow than ſhe had been uſed to do. She gave him her hand, in token of her not doing ſo; he carried the precious gift to his lips, and wiped from her cheeks the trickling drops.—After much perſuaſion and many ſtruggles, ſhe put on a more placid aſpect; but her face, the whole day, reminded me of the old

ſimile of "an April-day," one moment a gleam of ſmiles, the next a ſhower of tears. This was not likely to produce mirth, and has cured me of any inclination to ſee a wedding.—At Emma's requeſt, I was left with her; but things are growing now much *too ſerious* for me, ſo I ſhall move for going home in a day or two: as I can be of no real ſervice, I muſt be rather an incumbrance; for, to be ſincere, a ſick room is my averſion, and ſighs and wailings my dread. I leave to thoſe, whom the Fates have been pleaſed to "deck moſt amiably "in tears," to purſue their weeping: for my ſhare, I am contented to exerciſe the leſs becoming

coming faculty of riſibility—— which that I may do, it will be needful for me to quit this manſion, where every viſage ſpeaks misfortune near.—I am exceedingly ſorry for Mr. Egerton, and pity Mrs. Walpole moſt heartily; but there is a prevailing principle in my temper, which bids me fly from melancholy as the worſt of peſts.——That you may never be in the way of it, is the beſt wiſh which can be formed for you by

Your affectionate
Humble ſervant,
CATHARINE BISHOP.

Mr.

Mr. WALPOLE to Col. SUTTON.

LETTER XXVI.

Burton.

THE laſt ſolemn ſcene is cloſed, and Mr. Egerton is no longer ſenſible of the infirmities of nature: the livid and emaciated body no more ſhrinks with pain.—He is happy: the virtuous muſt be ſo; if religion had not told us, reaſon would have informed us of that truth. He lived but ten days after he gave his daughter to me: our whole time has been ſince ſpent in

ſmoothing

ſmoothing his paſſage from this, to the other world.

Emma bore with amazing fortitude his approaches to the laſt moment; her apparent reſignation ſurpriſed me: but her grief had been reſtrained, to burſt forth with greater violence; for as ſoon as ſhe knew her father could not be hurt by it, ſhe gave vent to her oppreſſed heart: I never beheld ſuch a picture of diſtreſs!—It was with difficulty I forced her from his bed; and when that was accompliſhed, all my rhetoric could not prevail on her to go to Biſhop's.—"She would not leave "the dear remains, but would "watch

" watch by them, until ſhe had " paid the laſt tribute, by attend- " ing them to the grave."

After fruitleſs endeavours to convince her of the abſurdity of increaſing her affliction, I affected to be angry at her obſtinacy, and putting on an air of reproach, I aſked—if ſhe had forgotten that ſhe had a huſband? Never did queſtion bring about ſo ſudden a change—ſhe looked at me an inſtant; then, as if ſhe had recollected herſelf, ſhe dried her eyes, and told me ſhe had no more to ſay; I might carry her where I pleaſed: glad of having her in this mood, I took her paſſive hand, and conducted

her to the coach, which had been waiting ſome time at the door.— But we had not arrived at our journey's end, when I began to repent of the ſtratagem I had made uſe of. The ſmothered ſorrow, not having been allowed to take its natural courſe, put on the terrifying appearance of frenzy: ſhe had not ſpoke a word after we quitted the houſe, until we got within a mile of Burton, though I had tried by every endearment to make her forget the harſhneſs I had been obliged to exerciſe; but ſtarting on a ſudden, ſhe demanded, in the wildeſt manner, "who I was, "and by what authority I had drag-

"ged

"ged her from her father?"—When I had told her who ſhe was with, and ſoothed her for ſome time, I aſked her, if ſhe did not know me?—"Yes, Sir," replied ſhe with great quickneſs, "I know you--you are *my huſband.*" The emphaſis with which ſhe uttered the laſt word, proved the effect it had had on her—I could have killed myſelf for having made ſo bad an uſe of it—but without attempting to excuſe what I had done, I immediately called out to the poſtilions, and ordered them to drive back to Sunbury. She took my meaning, and reclining her head on my boſom, ſhe wept plentifully.—When we

arrived, I was determined not to controul her in any of her fancies; but to follow her through all the mazes which her ſorrow ſhould invent. She did not go into the room where the body lay; but hurrying into her dreſſing-room, I went in with her: here we ſat until late in the evening. She had not eaten the whole day: when the ſupper was ſerved up, ſhe ſtill refuſed to taſte any thing; I told her then, that as my eating depended on hers, and ſhe had declared ſhe would not have any ſupper, the things might be removed, for I would not ſit down to table without her. This had the deſired effect; her complaiſance got

got the better of her firſt reſolution: ſhe ſat down, ſaying ſhe would eat a bit of chicken, rather than that I ſhould faſt longer. About ten o'clock ſhe begged I would let her ſee her father once more, for that ſhe had never paſſed a night without paying her duty to him: I accompanied her into the chamber where the corpſe lay. She was not now outrageous in her expreſſions; but, as if ſtruck with awe on entering the place where the moſt ſolemn ſilence reigned, ſhe moved ſoftly up to the coffin, and looked for ſome time on it; then throwing herſelf on her knees at a little diſtance from it, her ſweet eyes caſt

up to Heaven, she seemed to be lost in meditation.—After she had thus indulged in all "the luxury "of grief" for near half an hour, she arose, and beckoned me to follow her. Going back to the room we had been in before, as soon as we re-entered it—"My "dear Mr. Walpole (said the "lovely mourner) I am infinitely "indebted to you for the part "you have taken in my affliction: "never can I forget your tender-"ness; it has preserved me from "despair.—I have had time for "reflection, and will go to Bur-"ton to-morrow morning as ear-"ly as you please.—You are very "right in what you say—I in-

"creased

" creaſed my diſtreſs unneceſſarily;
" but the firſt attacks of ſorrow
" are hard to be reſiſted: let this
" be my apology with you: I will
" for the future remember I am
" a Chriſtian, and as ſuch, under
" an abſolute obligation to ſubmit
" to the decrees of Providence."

Charmed with her words and manner, I never once interrupted her during this ſpeech; though at the concluſion of it I was vehement in expreſſing my admiration of her. She rewarded my praiſe, by ſmiling through her tears. .... She paſſed a ſleepleſs night, and was up very early the next morning. When we had breakfaſted, ſhe enquired if the

coach was ready: I had ordered it before, and handing her into it, we drove to Burton, where the whole family expreſſed the moſt friendly concern for her.

This dear girl has been a ſpoiled child, who never knew what contradiction was: meek as her diſpoſition is, ſhe reſents the leaſt degree of aſperity, not indeed by returning it, but by—the more infallible method of diſarming it—her tears.

Lady Catharine ſpends all her hours in my Emma's apartment; and Miſs Biſhop, who boaſted ſo much of her vivacity, has ſacrificed a great deal of it to partake of her friend's melancholy:

ly: ſhe never appears before her whilſt Mr. Biſhop is with her, leſt *his* fondneſs ſhould remind her of the loſs ſhe has ſuſtained in *her father*; nor does ſhe uſe that word in ſpeaking of him when my wife is preſent. Theſe are delicacies, Sutton, that ſhow Kitty's heart to be capable of very refined ſentiments; ſhe riſes in my opinion every day: one muſt be in the ſituation I am in now, to be fully ſenſible of the merit of ſuch actions.—Grief then, I find, improves the heart; it humaniſes, it renders us more fit for ſociety, by making us dependent on others for relief; and, in conſequence of the eaſe we pro-

cure from our friends, more partial to the human ſpecies in general. But I forget that one muſt be at Burton to experience fully the charms of ſympathy; ſuch ſouls are not to be met with every where; ours are ſuch *friends* as few are bleſſed with. Yet will I not be ſo great a miſanthrope as to ſuppoſe *the ſort* confined to this family alone: you, my dear George, would prove me unjuſt; for you have upon every occaſion been the *real* friend of

Yours,

WILLIAM WALPOLE.

From

From the SAME to the SAME.

LETTER XXVII.

Spring-Park.

AS ſoon as the funeral was over, Emma deſired to come to Spring-Park. I thought the ſeaſon too far advanced to carry her further into the country, and repreſented this to her, after informing her that a houſe in Portman-Square had been fitted up for her reception, if ſhe choſe to paſs the remainder of the winter in town: but finding her much againſt that ſcheme, I at length conſented to her coming here.

here. We have no company here at preſent; a peſtilence would not depopulate our neighbourhood, more than the coming of Chriſtmas does. But luckily I have not been married long enough, Colonel, to have any objection to a *tête à tête* party; and time paſſes very agreeably, though we have none of your gaieties here—Emma's voice and harpſichord afford me more harmony than any of your operas: her ſentiments improve my heart more than any which your players repeat: nor do your meetings at Almack's and Cornelys's give any entertainment ſo elegant as her converſation. From this ſketch

you

you may perceive how little I can wiſh for any amuſement more than what my own houſe produces. The dear girl is now in that pleaſing ſtate when the heart is juſt recovering from a deep wound: all is calm and tender, and her melancholy ſeems now to be the effect rather of gentleneſs than of ſorrow. . . . Could I ſuppoſe you as unfaſhionable as myſelf, I would aſk you to join us—yet, upon ſecond thoughts, you ſhall not ſee my Emma until ſhe has regained her native charms: good air, regular hours, and my care, will make her a complete beauty again in a very ſhort time. You may allow me

to

to be vain of my wife's perſon, ſince I never was ſo of my own.—Not much merit, you'll ſay perhaps, in this laſt circumſtance: but, let me tell you, George, I have had ſome *civil* things ſaid to me; and the coxcomb never takes the trouble of examining into the judgment of his admirers—it is ſufficient for him that he is admired. Then it is plain that I am not one; and, as times go, this is *high merit*, and I have a right to ſome ſhare of commendation for it.

I could not get Kitty Biſhop to come down with us; ſhe had no idea of being thrown into the vapours with leafleſs trees, hol-

low

low winds, and all the horrors of being ſeventy or eighty miles from London before May. When ſhe is tired of that delightful place, ſhe promiſes to viſit us in Dorſetſhire: by that time you may make the *quartetto*, or ſooner if you will pleaſe

Your affectionate

WILLIAM WALPOLE.

Col. SUTTON to W. WALPOLE, Eſq.

LETTER XXVIII.

Bond-Street.

TAKE back, my dear Walpole, the epithet of *happy* which you *once* beſtowed on me; it

it is yours now, by every claim—may you enjoy it until the charming Emma robs you of it, or your friend wiſhes you to loſe it! Your kind ſtars have doomed you to the pleaſing employment of weeping with, or of drying the tears of, your beloved; and you may join in her ſorrows without the cutting reproach of having cauſed them. How is your fate to be envied, when compared to mine! I ſhould not complain, if a knowledge of my crime could reconcile me to the puniſhment inflicted on it—I plead guilty; but, far from finding this any alleviation to my torments, the ſtings of conſcience

only

only ſerve to give new ſharpneſs to them.—You have told me you *felt* as if *I* had not behaved quite well to Miſs Neville: I honored you for the propriety of your feelings; but yours were only the forebodings of an heart intereſted for the conduct of a man, with whom you are connected by the ties of friendſhip: your ſenſations were only juſt what they ſhould have been, and not attended with the pangs of remorſe, the ſure conſequence of deviating from the paths of rectitude.——O for thoſe lucky moments to return, when I talked to you inceſſantly of my Priſcy! It was then I knew all the joys

of

of an attachment founded on the firm baſis of virtue. If I had not abſolutely given a ſolemn promiſe of marriage to this admirable girl, I had at leaſt convinced her by every action, that I meant to have no other wife; and I never yet could make thoſe abſurd diſtinctions, which many of us do, between ſpeaking what we mean, and implying it by looks and deeds. Miſs Neville gave me a preference, that left me no room to doubt, from the tenor of her behavior, which was guided by an unerring prudence, that ſhe looked upon me in the light I wiſhed her to do. When a man ſingles out a young woman, upon

a footing with himſelf in point of birth, there is but one view which he can be ſuppoſed to have. She had certainly then a right to conſider me as her own, and I wiſhed for no greater happineſs than to be ſo.—I had *dangled* about her for more than three years, when her ſiſter's imprudent marriage and ſubſequent misfortunes called for all her tenderneſs; and ſhe in ſome meaſure ſeemed to have withdrawn her affections from every other object, in order to laviſh them on the inconſolable Mrs. Wentworth. I had called on her ſeveral times, when ſhe had either been engaged in attending her ſiſter, and

refuſed

refuſed to ſee me; or ſhe had come into the room where I was, ſo abſorbed in melancholy as hardly to ſeem ſenſible of my being there. Amiable as her motives for her ſlighting me were, and thoroughly acquainted as I was with them, I could not help being wounded by her indifference. I fancied myſelf entitled to as much of her attention as ever; and finding I no longer enjoyed it, I falſely concluded that ſhe had no more of that regard for me which I had hoped for.—I informed her of my intention of going into the country for a few months, and begged to hear from her when ſhe could ſpare time

to

to write. She wiſhed me a good journey, and promiſed that I ſhould have letters from her: prepoſſeſſed as I was with mean ſuſpicions, I imagined her coldneſs more viſible in this viſit, than ever it had been before; and I ſet out for Percy's, convinced of her never having loved me. When I got there, the ſprightly Miſs Courtney attracted my notice by her bloom, her *enjoüement*, and a thouſand nameleſs graces which played about the laughter-loving damſel: theſe however would have cauſed no more than admiration, had ſhe not, by a peculiarity in her manner when ſhe ſpoke to me, and the very

very glaring difference ſhe made between me and every other man who pretended to diſtinguiſh her, ſhown a partiality which at once raiſed me in my own eſteem, and called upon *my gratitude* to return it. My connexion with Miſs Neville had given me no opportunity of knowing the wiles of coquettry; ſuperior to all the little arts of low minds, ſhe had always treated me with the genuine effuſions of an heart tender, delicate, and noble: from this pattern I drew all my ideas of virtuous women.—Harriet, with the ſame mind, (as I conjectured) had the additional merit with me of *loving*: my imagination, fired at

the

the portrait of ſuch united charms, idoliſed it—I no longer felt the calm refinements of the ſentiments Priſcy uſed to inſpire: all was tumult, and unremitted ardor—the joyous hours flew with rapidity in the company of this enlivening prattler.——In a few weeks I had gone farther in declaring my paſſion for her, than I had done in as many years to my former flame. I was aſtoniſhed when, on ſober reflexion, I perceived the lengths I had gone; for, angry as I was at the amiable Priſcy, I had no fixed plan of giving her up when I firſt flirted with Miſs Courtney: the pain her indifference gave me

ſpoke plainly how dear ſhe was to my ſoul; but drawn in, by innumerable ſnares, to converſe frequently with this artful girl, and blinded by my own folly, I diſcovered, when it was too late, that I had ſaid more than I could honorably recede from, unleſs I pleaded a prior engagement, which now ſcarcely held good in my opinion. Thus divided in my ſentiments, I heſitated for a while how to proceed: poſt after poſt arrived, without bringing me a line from Miſs Neville; and Harriet was hourly proving her tenderneſs for me by ſome new inſtance of it: theſe preponderated, and in an evil moment I

wrote

wrote to the firſt, told her my ſuſpicions of her coldneſs had been confirmed by her ſilence ſince I had left town; that *my eſteem* for her was unalterable; but that, as I could expect nothing more from *her*, I had been tempted to offer my heart to one who returned my love with equal warmth; yet I did not preſume to diſpoſe of it without obtaining her leave for ſo doing. Her anſwer to this impertinence was ſuch as, by my ſoul, forced me in my higheſt raptures to lament her loſs!——

After this, we dropped all correſpondence: my head ran only upon the extatic bliſs of Harriet's being mine; and if a diſagreeable recollection now and then obtruded itſelf

upon me, I flew to my Siren, and it diſappeared. I did not acquaint Percy with my attachment to Miſs Courtney, as ſhe and I had agreed that to be unneceſſary until her father had been conſulted; but I framed an excuſe for my returning to him after I had been at Milfield. You know the ſucceſs of my viſionary ſcheme; therefore I'll ſay not another ſyllable of it.

Mortifying as it was to be abandoned by her, I did not permit myſelf to think of it after the firſt ſurpriſe was over; nay, I even perſuaded myſelf that I was callous, and could not be affected by any attacks *ſhe* could make upon my peace. The diſdain I felt for a Sphynx, as you pro-

properly define a coquette to be, ſeemed an aſſurance of my not being hurt by her fickleneſs: whether it was ſo or not, I did not take leiſure to conſider, being then ſenſible only of the wrongs I had done to a more deſerving woman. Occupied with this reflection ſolely, I hurried up to London, meaning to deprecate Miſs Neville's wrath, by the moſt open avowal of my errors, and, if ſhe would accept of it, to expiate them by an unſhaken fidelity for the reſt of my life. I had been ſeveral days in Bond-ſtreet, before I could bring myſelf to attempt ſo arduous a taſk, as that of obtaining forgiveneſs from a perſon ſo juſtly incenſed. The more I thought over my tranſgreſſions, the more difficult

it appeared. Grown quite deſperate at laſt, I reſolved to delay no more, but either to be relieved by her pity, or to be deſtroyed by her inflexibility. I immediately directed my ſteps towards Park-ſtreet, ſummoning up all my courage as I paſſed along Groſvenor-ſquare and the two Brook-ſtreets. When I came to the door, I had not effrontery enough to look up as I was wont to do, in hopes of catching a glance, from the windows, of that face whoſe benign influence had ſo long ruled my fate.—After repeatedly rapping, a man who belonged to an adjacent ſhop came out of it, and informed me, that Mrs. Wentworth and Miſs Neville had been gone above ſix weeks from

that houſe, but where they had removed to he could not tell. I was planet-ſtruck at this intelligence; it ſeemed to portend the moſt diſagreeable events: my Priſcy had never before taken a ſtep of this ſort without acquainting me with it; ſhe had done it now, evidently, to avoid my viſits: but of what could I complain? I had deſerted her firſt, and this was but a ſmall part of what I merited from her. I ſtood motionleſs on the ſpot where I had heard of her departure for ſome time, not well knowing whither to go in purſuit of her.—After naming over a catalogue of her acquaintance, to find out a proper one to make enquiries of about the ſiſters, I ſet out, and called at a dozen

 doors,

doors, without gaining admittance at any. On going home again, I recollected that it was concert-night, and probably I ſhould meet ſome one there, who could direct me to their habitation. I dreſſed, dined at Boodle's, and went there afterwards. On my going in, the firſt perſon I ſaw was Miſs Bertie, whom I had ſeen oftener with her than any of her other viſiters: this rivetted me to her ſide, and I ſoon found an opportunity of introducing a converſation about *her friend*. "Were "you not amazed," aſked my companion, "at the ſuddenneſs of "her quitting town?" Without waiting to hear my reply, ſhe went on informing me of the remarks

that

that had been made on a retreat which was totally unexpected; as, whatever inclination Mrs. Wentworth might have had for ſolitude, it was generally ſuppoſed that Miſs Neville had *reaſons* for continuing in the world—" but you and ſhe " have ſettled that matter, I dare " ſay," added Miſs Bertie, with a very ſignificant look. It required ſome dexterity to come off here with a tolerable grace: mine failed me, and I was going to change my ſeat, when this provoking *enquirer* obliged me to keep it, by running on in the ſame ſtrain, " Come, come, " Colonel, ſince you don't care to " give me a direct anſwer to that, " I muſt inſiſt, at leaſt, upon your

" telling

" telling me how to addreſs my " letters to her; for I happened to " be out of town when ſhe took her " flight, and have not ſince been " able to learn where ſhe is gone " to." This quite diſconcerted me: I began to make ſome excuſe for my ignorance, but ſtammered, and was ſo confuſed, that, not knowing what to make of me, ſhe called to Lord Carleton, who was ſtanding near her, to know whether there was any thing improper in what ſhe had ſaid. My Lord proteſted he could not ſee any impropriety in it, but, ſhrugging up his ſhoulders, obſerved, that lovers could not be too cautious in theſe days. I left her to the *ſagacious* peer, and ſlunk away from

from that part of the room, but without gaining any great advantage from my change, as I could have no ſatisfactory account of my fugitives. Fatigued with the idle prate of thoſe who mentioned them, I would truſt no longer to their ſurmiſes, but determined on viſiting every place where I thought it likely they ſhould have concealed themſelves. I did ſo, and after the moſt unwearied diligence employed in the ſearch, I am come back to London, diſpirited, and out of all hopes of ever finding them.

Such, my dear Walpole, is my ſtate at preſent: without any reliſh for amuſements, I live in public; hear and ſee all that paſſes, without finding

finding myſelf diſſipated enough to forget Miſs Neville, or entertained enough not to regret her. If infidelity was always thus ſeverely puniſhed, how ſeldom ſhould we hear of diſtreſſes occaſioned by the caprice or perfidy of lovers! . .

But I will not detain you from the enjoyment of Mrs. Walpole's company, ſo much more calculated to make you happy, than the lamentations of a correſpondent who has not now a comfort left, ſaving that of being

Your friend,

GEORGE SUTTON.

END OF VOL. I.

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